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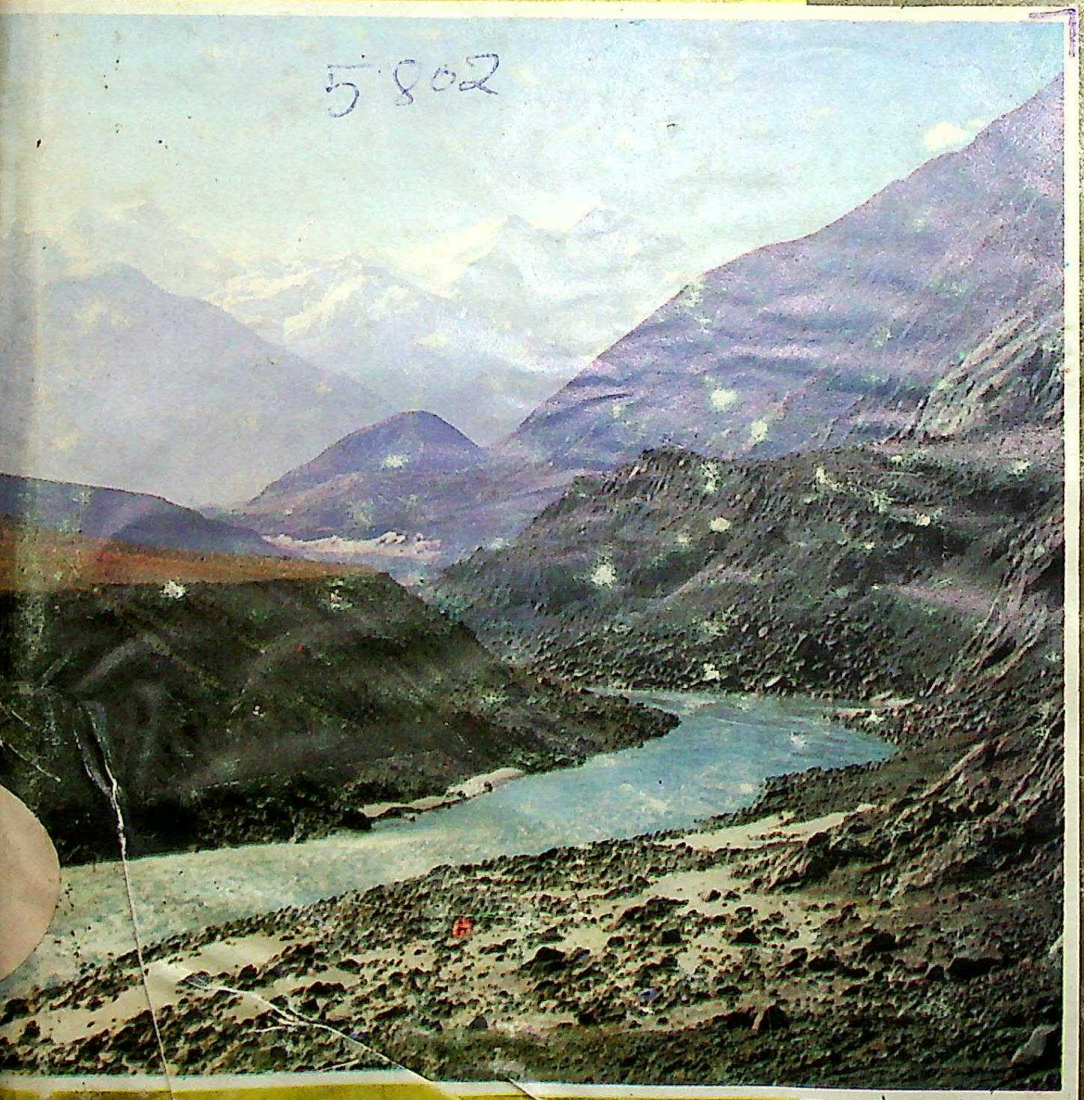
# CHILAS

## THE CITY OF NANGA PARVAT (DYAMAR)



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BY

PROFESSOR
AHMAD HASAN DANI

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Himalaya has been a great attraction to adventurers and mountain climbers Nanga Parvat (Dyamar) its westernmost peak has withstood the challenge of man The life beyond Himalaya in the Karakorum Region is still more challenging **Chilas The City of Nanga Parvat** is the first attempt to unravel the mystery of the past The recent discoveries of unusual nature provide a glimpse of the trans-Himalayan man It is a book of perennial interest to all those who have a love for adventure and an interest to fathom the unknown It is illustrated with twelve colour, one hundred black and white plates and two maps

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GIFT

# CHILAS

## THE CITY OF NANGA PARVAT (DYAMAR)

Presented by,

by

Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani

Professor Emeritus

Quaid-i-Azam University Islamabad

*Islamabad 1983*

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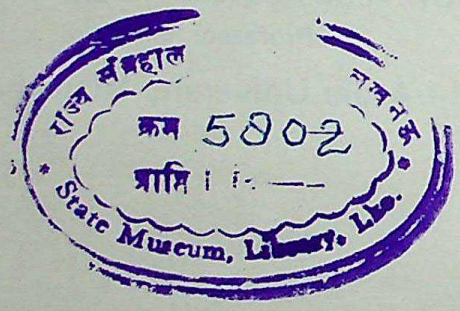


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*To*

*My daring colleagues of the Pak-German Team*
*who have braved with me the perils of*
*Trans-Himalayan Survey*
*and*
*shared the joy of adventure*

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## PREFACE

For the last three years a Pak-German team has been working in the Karakorum Region to survey the whole range of material relating to ethnology, archaeology, anthropology, linguistics, languages, history and folklore, Recording is still under way. Originally professor Karl Jettmar of the University of Heidelberg had made exploratory trips into this region. He created interest in me and literally dragged me into this field and brought other members of the team from his country. The Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan sent its own representative, Mian Said Qamar, to join the team. The combined efforts led to several discoveries of unusual interest. Of all such discoveries Chilas has so far produced the largest archaeolgical data, including inscriptions and rock carvings. Mainly basing on archaeological data, it has been possible for me to reconstruct a fairly good account of the history and culture of the area. Most of the inscridtions have been deciphered by me and rock carvings identified. On their basis a reconstruction is being presented here with a view to apprise the readers of the type of data that has remained so far unnoticed and unutilised. The reconstruction is my own and the material is presented here in the light of my best understanding. The publication has been made possible by two grants that I received : one from the Centre of the Study of the Civilisations of Central Asia, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and second from the Institute of Islamic History, Culture and Civilisation, Islamic University, Islamabad. Some money saved from an earlier grant by the Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, for the publication of Journal of Paktisan Studies, has also been utilised for this purpose. I am thankful to all these agencies for their generosity. I am also thankful to Dr. S. R. Dar, Director of Lahore Museum, for supervising the printing at Newfine Printing Press Lahore. The index has been prepared by the staff of the Lahore Museum.

Islamabad
June 1, 1983.

Professor Ahmad Hasan Dani

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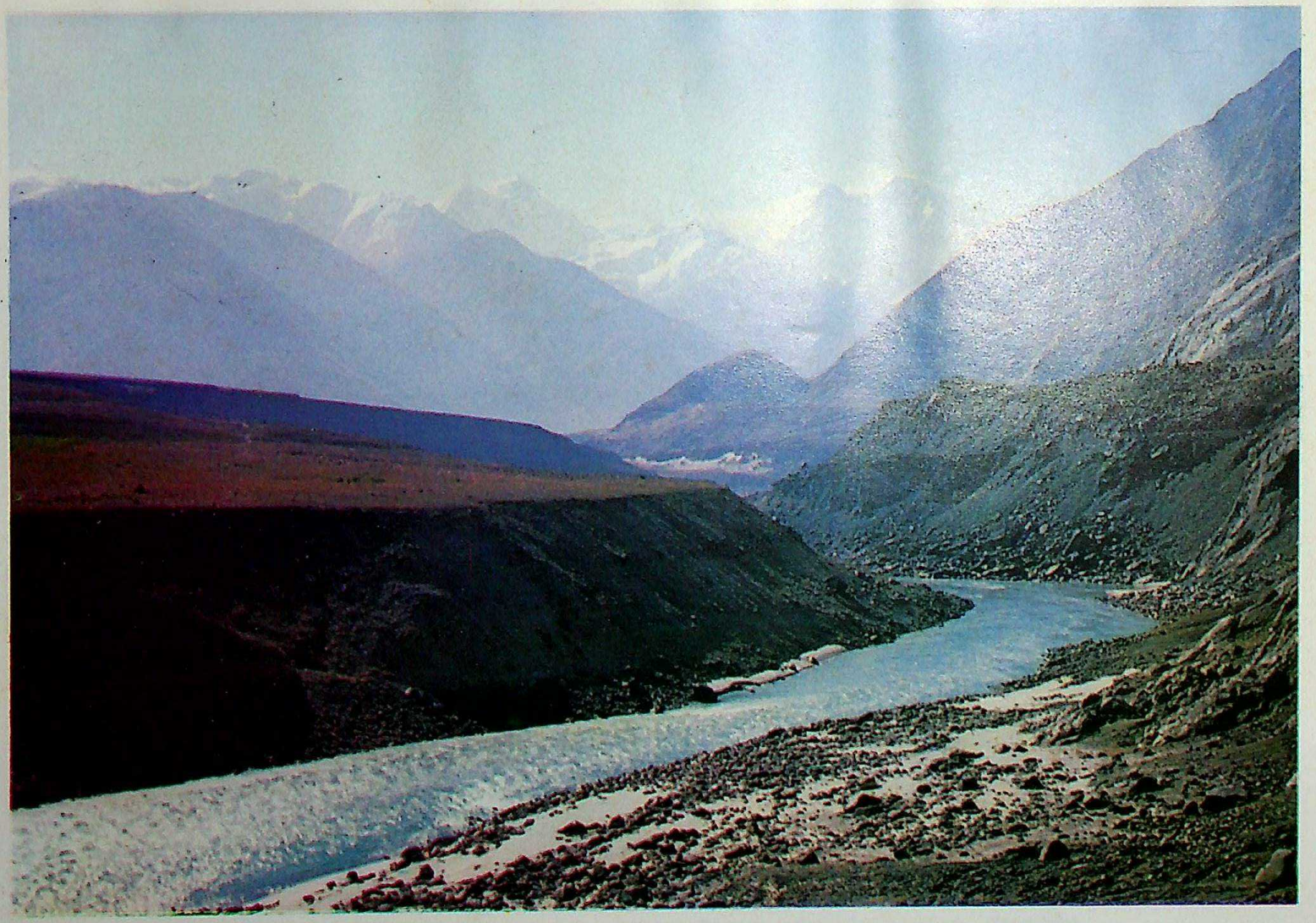

Plate 1 : Nanga Parvat (Dyamar) as seen from the east near Janglot.

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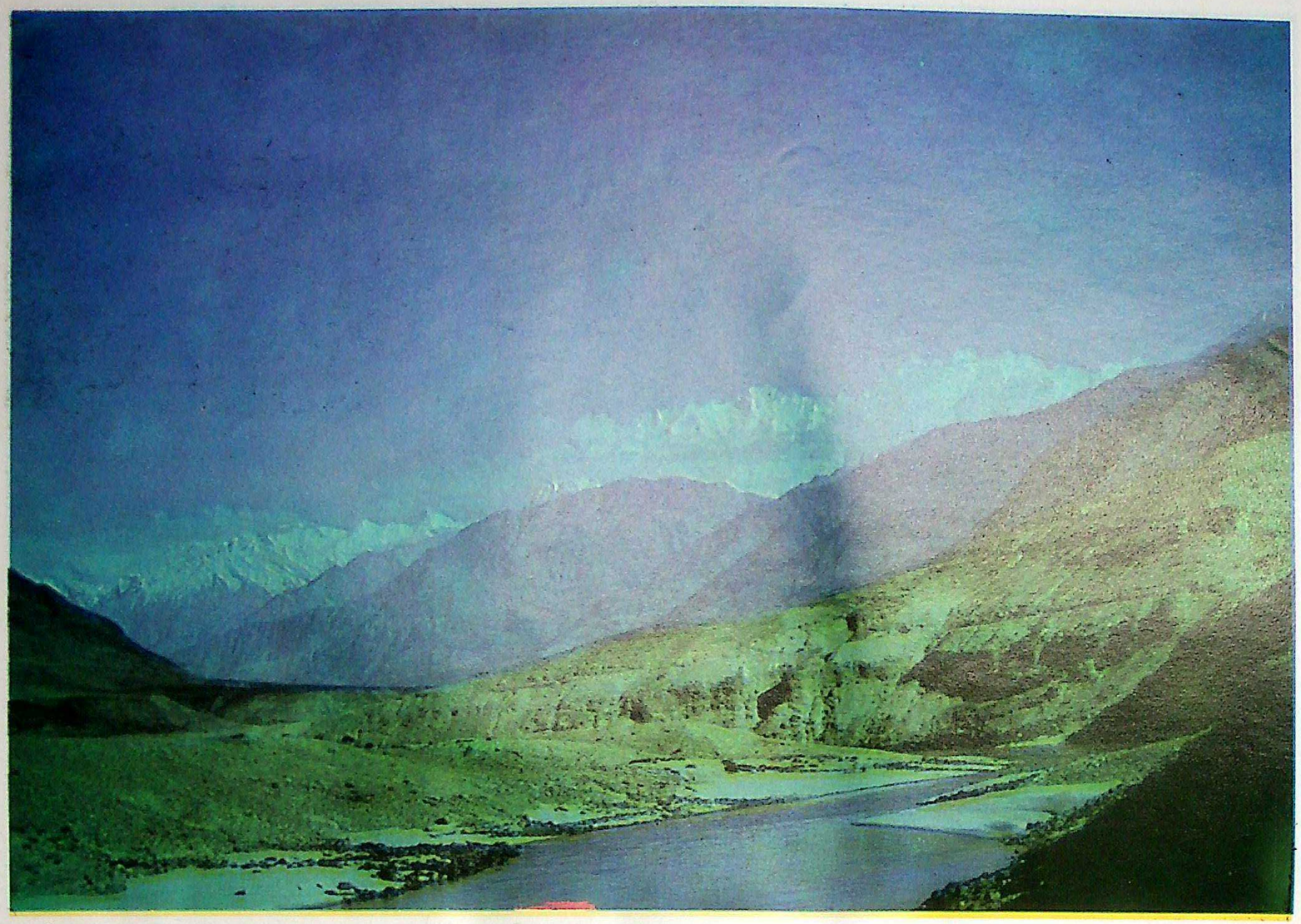

Plate 2 : Nanga Parvat (Dyamar) as seen from the west near Hodur.

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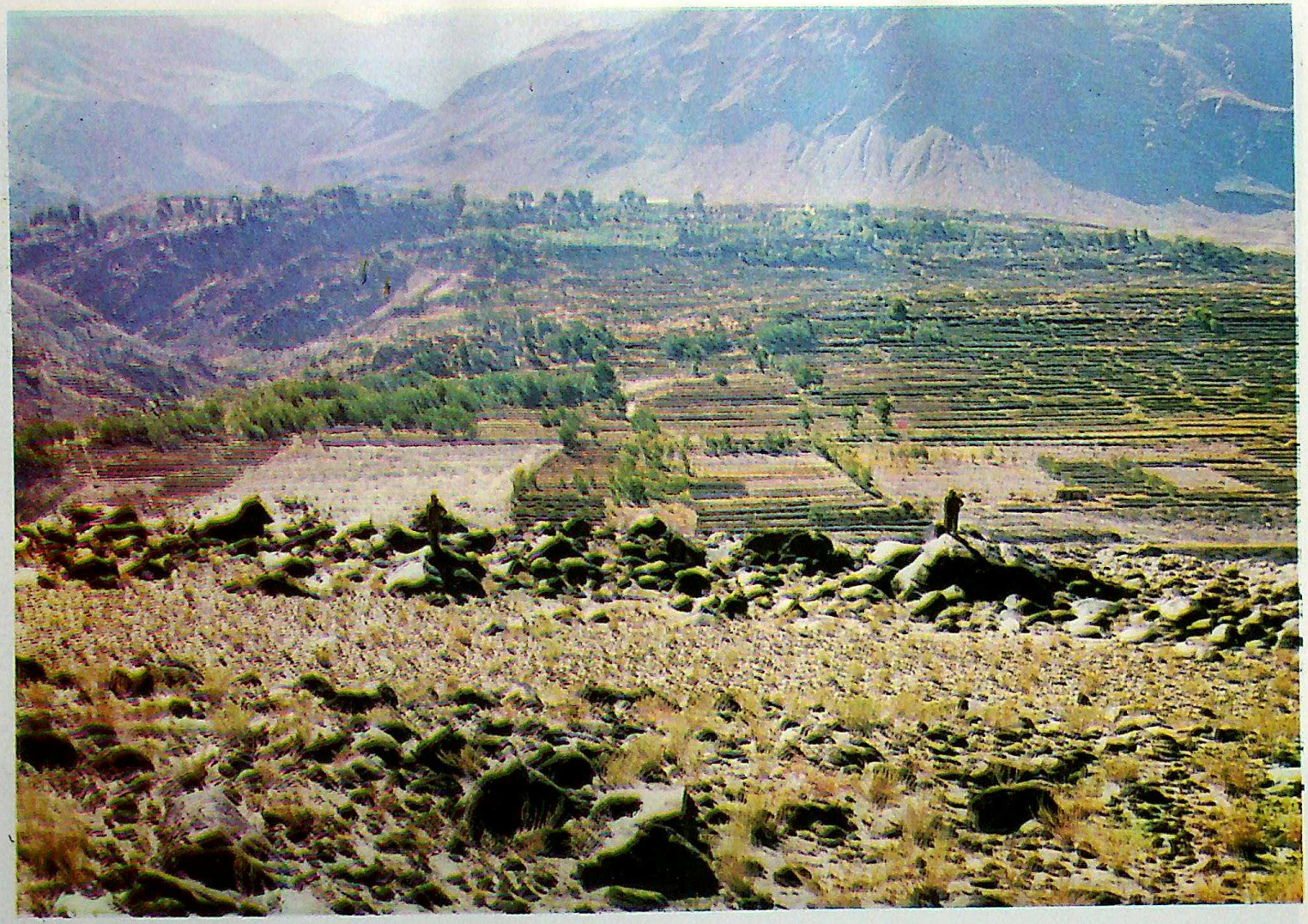

Plate 3 : Chilas town as seen from the right side of the Indus river. Boulders with prehistoric carvings lie in between two standing men.

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Plate 4 : Thalpan village as seen from Thak site.

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Plate 5 : Thalpan site with sandy plain and boulders with carvings on either side of the Khinnar nala.

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Plate 6 : Thalpan I : First sermon of the Buddha.

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Plate 7 : Chilas I : A panel showing Buddha, stupa, Manju Sri, devotee and Maitreya.

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Plate 8 : Chilas I : A panel showing Avalokitesvara, Maitreya and stupa.

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Plate 9 : Chilas I : A typical stupa of 7th century A.D.

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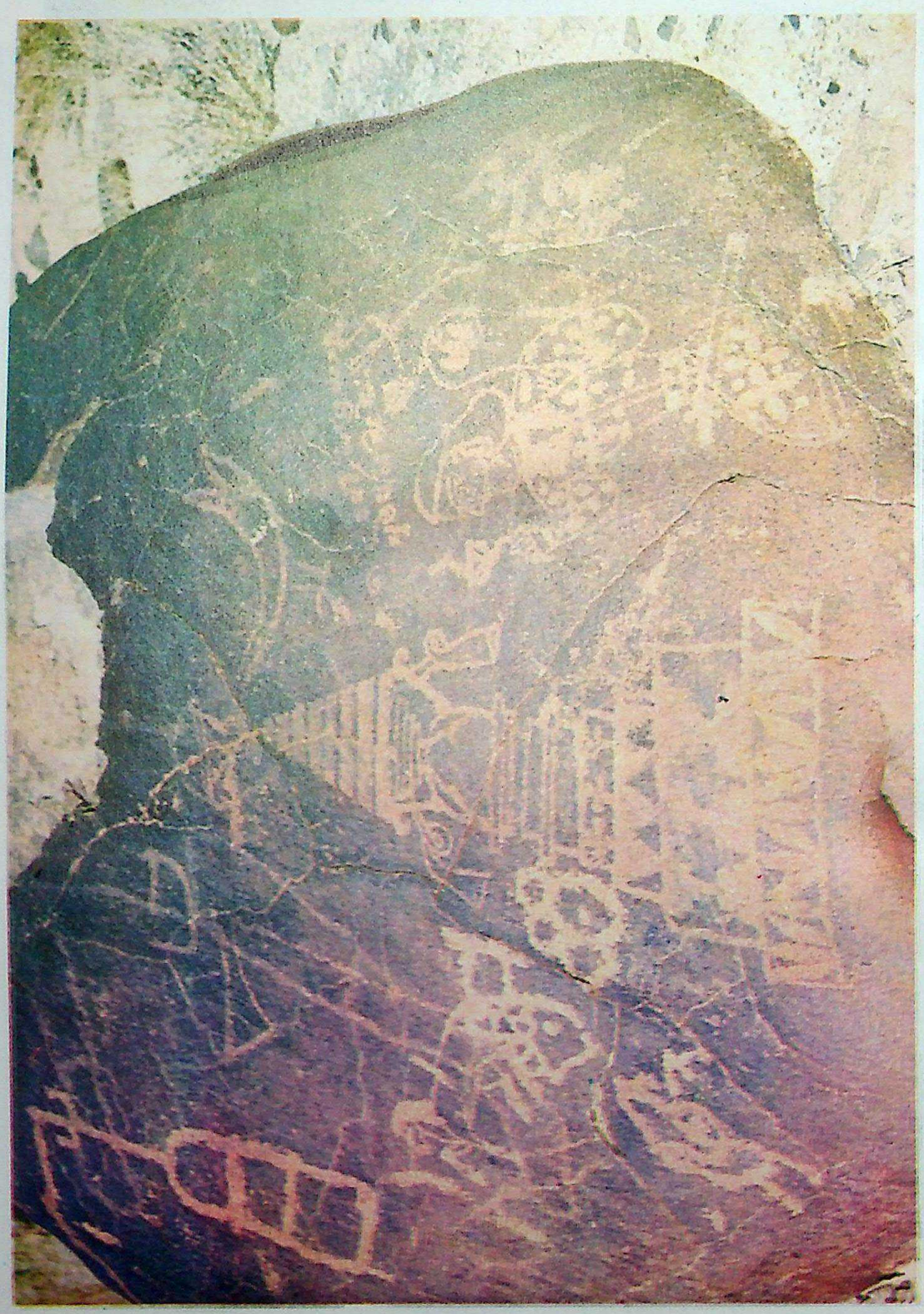

Plate 10 : Ziarat II : A Central Asian devotee before a stupa.

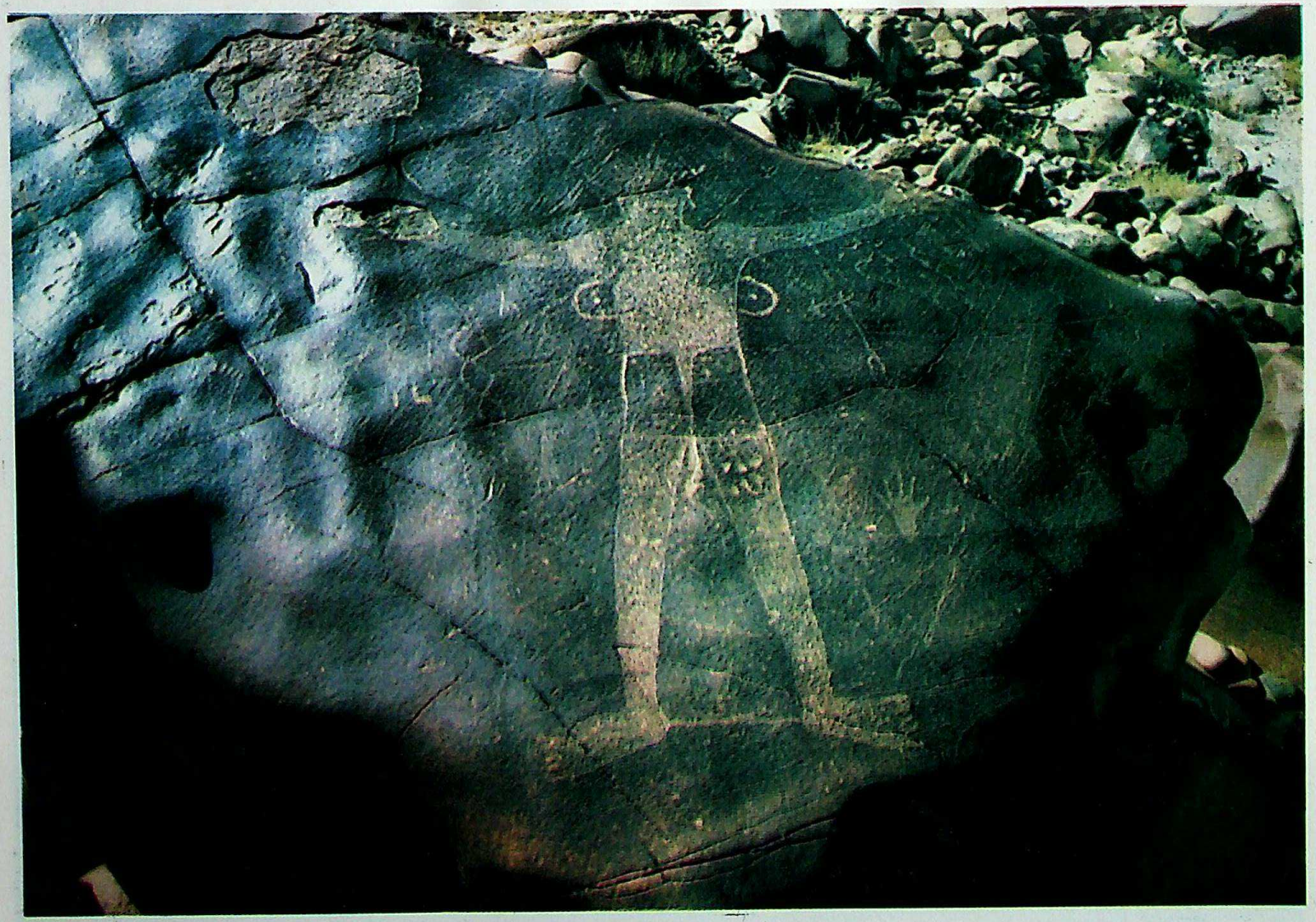

Plate 11 : Chilas VI : A giant *deva* (prehistoric).

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Plate 12 : Chilas VI : A typical ibex of ritual significance, 7th century A.D.

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# CHAPTER I

## TOPOGRAPHY

Chilas is the premier city on the upper course of the Indus river standing under the shadow of the world famous Nanga Parvat. Below this highest peak range down the baby peaks of Bonar and Thak. All these peaks stand in graded heights. On a clear day, when the sky is blue, a drive along the Karakorum Highway from as far as Shatial, a place forty miles from Chilas down the Indus, catches occasional glimpses (plate 2) of the snowy hills until one is up the by-pass of the Chilas city, where he is face to face with the snowline, not of course of the Nanga, but of the baby peaks, who are there to welcome and lure the pilgrims onward to the Nanga height. The Karakorum Highway along the Indus by-passes all these hills, keeping them on the right and the river on the left, until one reaches the foot of the mount at Raikot, about forty miles to the east, where the Highway bids farewell to the Nanga, crosses the river and follows its other bank towards Janglot in the Sai valley. It is here that the second marvellous view (plate 1) of the Nanga is presented. In the early morning the rays of the sun bounce back from the peak and reflect a wonderful display of communion between the glorious lift of the snows and the solar glow that tries to embrace them. It is a sight to be seen but it beggars description. No wonder that the people of old called the peak by the name of Dyamar (correctly *Diva-Meru* meaning "Heavenly Mount"). It is foolish and unimaginative to have applied the name *Nanga* (literally meaning "naked") to it by the rulers of the nineteenth century. It is, however, satisfying that the people today have

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once again revived the old name, and call the entire zone as Dyamar district, of which Chilas is the headquarter. It includes the *tehsils* (sub-divisions) of Tangir, Darel and Astor, named after the rivers that have cut down valleys from the hills and made human living possible. The whole of the Karakorum zone, as far as human habitation is concerned, is broken up into numerous river valleys where man has lived for centuries in isolation and preserved for posterity the languages of old, the cultures of old and the living patterns of old. It is here that a cross-section of history can be viewed and appreciated. But Chilas is an exception. It is right on the Indus commanding an opening on the Indus for nealy eighty miles and facilitating a traditional crossing of the main Indus river and taking the pilgrims from the north, in which direction lie Gilgit and the trans-Pamir countries, to south over the Babusar pass towards the ancient city of Taxila and the Indus plains. Chilas really lies at the cross-roads of communication and also of history.

Chilas lies at 74°1′E longitude and 35°4′N latitude, 310 miles north-east of Islamabad and 90 miles south of Gilgit along the Karakorum Highway. But this is a longer way. The old route hit directly from Gilgit over the hill and came down through the northern river valleys towards the Indus. The distance is hardly about fortyfive miles. Similarly southward the old route converged on the Babusar pass, which is thirty miles away from Chilas, and further led on one side through the Sapat *maidan* to Jalkot and beyond to Hazara plain over Kaghan and on the other side across Niat to Phasat plain and onward to Kel and Kashmir.

Today Chilas is the name of the city but in ancient time it was the name of the *vishaya* (district). Alberuni calls it *Shiltās*, and in a rock inscription of sixth century A.D. at Chilas itself it is spelt as *Śilavaṭa*. In the Sanskrit language *śilā* means "rock" or "stone" while in the local Śiṇā language "vaṭa" also means "stone". Hence *Śilavaṭa* may be translated as "Rock or Hill (region) of stones". In the same inscription the name of the city is given as *Somanagara, i.e.* "The City of Moon". This name is also found in a second inscription (No. 1) of the fifth century A.D. at Thalpan bridge, where the full reading is

*Vīra Somonagara, i.e.* "The Heroic City of Moon".

Although Chilas means "Hilly or Stony (region)", which is a suitable nomenclature from the point of view of local geography and environment, the city is not all stony nor are the hills so rugged and intrusive as

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to make the place narrow and difficult for habitation. On the contrary it is only in the vicinity of Chilas along the Indus river that human living has been possible because of the opening of the area as the hills have comparatively receded back, leaving behind wide-spread dry soily slopes, locally called *Dās*. In between the intrusive ranges which are broken by flood torrents for making their seasonal channels, the *Dās's* spread miles and miles, making several terraces of the receding Indus river. If the intrusive rocks are passed over, the silty soil makes huge deposits on either bank of the river, capable of cultivation if water could be made available to them. It is on the hollows and flats of the soily deposits that big boulders, which have been rolled down from hill tops, have been lying at random, for centuries unmoved and pressing their presence felt in the eyes of man. As the Chilas area is closed by high mountains on the north and the south, it is the Indus alignment which dictates the direction of wind. Shut up by the hills, Chilas is cut away from the blessings of rain, making the area extremely dry, hot in summer and cold in winter, but also susceptible to receiving gusty winds in the afternoons from beyond the opening in the direction of Kohistan on the west. The result is a strong gale which tears through the river and sweeps everything away. The river sand is blown and lifted and spread over the soily deposits as a thin layer giving the appearance of a vast desert. It is these wind-swept sandy deposits that meet the eye everywhere.

The opening, in the local language, is called *Dar*, akin to sanskrit *dvāra*, meaning "an entrance". There is actually an opening, known as *Darbati*, on the right bank down the Indus, about seven miles away from Chilas. Perhaps the name may be a survival of the ancient word *Darapati* occurring in an inscription at Thalpan and applied to a concept associated with the Hindu god Śiva. Whatever it may be, the name *Dar* got inseparably related to this region. It is no wonder that one entire valley that opens on the Shatial bears the name of Darel, meaning "the abode around the entrance". This does not mean that Darel was the only route from the north towards the Indus. In fact all the northern river valleys—Khinnar, Hodur, Khanberi, Darel and Tangir—have been used throughout history to come to the great opening of Chilas on the Indus. Therefore when the Chinese pilgrims speak of the country of Ta-li-lo, that need not be confined to Darel valley which was just one of the valleys leading on to the vast open area along the Indus. After reaching this country Hiuen Tsang followed the route along the Indus, certainly

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along the old pilgrim path, that is possible through this Chilas region—a region which has maintained its separate identity, historically and culturally, distinct from that of Gilgit and Hunza. It is therefore not unreasonable to find the ancient ruins all along the Indus from Shatial to Gor or Gauharabad, the last valley on the east. The largest concentration of such ruins—the greatest number of rock carvings at any place in the world—is at Chilas proper on either side of the river Indus. Archaeology thus testifies to the long history of this region and it is with this extensive region that Ta-li-lo of the Chinese pilgrims should be identified and the capital of U-Chang-na should be looked at the old site of Chilas and equated with its old name of Somanagara.

The hilly ranges around Chilas are a part of the tertiary uplift that threw up the Himalaya to its present height, enclosing within its womb many older rocks and various volcanic veins that lie entombed or crop up in different places. The outlier of these hills is granitic hard rock, which has several faults and hollows created by earth movements. Such earthquakes are common in this part, the most devastating has been around Basham and Paṭṭan in Kohistan in 1975 and in Darel and Tangir valleys in 1981. It is in the hollows that lakes have been formed after the glaciers have melted away and along the line of faults that the Indus and other channels have cut their lines of flow. The Indus breaks through deep gorges all along stony hills that stand like insuperable cliffs allowing the Indus to flow down between them. It is only around the Chilas area that the steep hills slope away towards nodal points on the south and the north leaving a wide passage for the river. A fall of a mountain block into the Indus due to tectonic movements could stop the flow of the river and turn the whole upstream into a great lake but when this block is broken asunder, the Indus flood runs roughshod down the channel drowning all human habitations and washing away men and animals. Such a flood did occur in the memory of man in 1841 when many villages in Chilas area were wiped away by the great flood. Such turmoils were greater in number in the pleistocene period, resulting in the huge deposit of conglomerate and clayey soil in alternate layers. Such deposits hang like cliffs over the Indus. The river erodes them year after year and floats them down as silt. It is these hanging cliffs of clay and conglomerate that menace the Karakorum Highway by pushing down landslides and wiping out several pieces of road. A study of these pleistocene beds and proper strengthening overhead can alone solve the

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calamities to man. As these deposits are on bed-rock, it is possible to stabilise them and avoid recurrent damage.

Yet these deposits have been a great boon for man's living. They have provided a free hand to the Indus for its meander and the river has cut various courses within the narrow space available in Chilas area. At the same time the river has made deeper and deeper beds leaving behind terraces on its either bank for the growth of forest and the living of men and animals. At Chilas itself four distinct terraces, each ranging between 100 to 200 feet, can be seen. As the Indus water is deep and its level fluctuating during summer and winter months because of the vagaries of hill snow, that water has not been utilized so far by man. This is no doubt a strange phenomenon because man has so far failed to harness the Indus flood. On the other hand it is the small rivulets and little water springs that have been easily tapped by man to make small settlements and in historic time develop agricultural fields limited to the areas where such water can reach. The natural result has been the growth of small village communities, each rivalling with the other for the possession of the fertile land and living all through history in a condition that is hardly above poverty level. Although vast land is available in Chilas area, yet man has built a few settlements at the mouths of the small rivulets, leaving the rest as barren land, called *Dās*. With such limited utilization the resource possibility has been restricted and hence the human population has hardly gone beyond a few thousands. The Indus has been kind to leave vast silty deposits but man has been too lazy to profit by this bounty of nature. He is satisfied by following his traditional pattern and living in the blissful seclusion of small valleys. Forest has provided the resources of wood and the valleys have the air and moisture sufficient for fruit cultivation, which, in course of history, has grown and expanded with the addition of wheat and maize crops. But the higher grounds and the plateaus are left wild as a pasture land for domesticated sheep and goats.

On the Raikot side Nanga Parvat has three peaks—Jalipur, Ganello and Burchul and the actual *Parvat* (hill) extends for nearly forty miles from Tat to Bonar village. The first open plain on the bank of the Indus is called the *Dās* of Daṛang, the first village on the right side. It is approached by a jeepable bridge, wherefrom one can go to Gauharabad through Haparing *nala*. There is an old fort at Daṛang, near which old rock carvings have been reported. Gauharabad is a sub-region, whose

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territorial limits extend on both sides of the river Indus, on the right bank from Gas Payin to Sagachal near the village of Thalich beyond Raikot bridge and on the left bank from Bonardās to Ramghat. Once Daṛang *Dās* is crossed, we come to Bargin valley, which is famous for fruits. After crossing the Shing *nala* we reach Gas Bala on a wide *Dās*, beyond which lies Gas Payin. A modern bridge gives access to both these places. Then starts a series of parallel ranges which strike on to the Thalpan village on the left bank of the Khinnar *nala*. Daṛang *Dās* on the left side of the river Indus extends upto Jalipur *nala*, which leads upward to the forested zone called Janglo. Beyond Jalipur is Kinudās, an extensive dry plain going upto Gandlo *nala*, so called from the sulphur deposit on a higher level. Then we come to Gonar *nala*, the village of Gonar being situated on the top of the *Dās* of that name. Near the Karakorum Highway some agricultural farms have developed. Next spreads out Bonardās, Bonar village being situated on the top. The following extensive *dās* is known after Yashukhal, *Yash* meaning bear and *khal* meaning barn in local language. The old story associates this *Dās* with bears. This is bounded on the west by Gini *nala*, followed by Dorong *nala* and a small village. Here the Thak ridge strikes right upto the Indus river. The Thak, which passes by it, is a considerable rivulet which comes down from Babusar and is joined by Niaṭ *nala* at Jal.

The heights of Niaṭ and Thak are thickly forested today. Income from the pine forest is the main stay of the people, supplemented by little cultivation of wheat and maize in the sparsely available land. Hence settlements are few and far between. Today the Thak river opens the route to Babusar top, where is the junction of Hazara, Kashmir and Chilas territorial limits. In the past this route does not seem to have been much used as the stone carvings have not been found to any great length on this route. However, coming down towards the mouth of the Thak rivulet we find a wide open *Dās*, that may be named as Thak Dās, at present dry and uncultivated. A plan to bring water from the upper course of the Thak, near the vicinity of Jal Village, is under execution, which certainly will change the whole complexion in a few years. The old foot-path traversed over this *Dās*, which is bisected by an unnamed *nala*. This old route led towards Gini village up on the hill, where old carvings have been reported. This *Dās* extends upto the river Buṭogāh. On the Indus river side there stands the stony ridge of Jayachand, which has been cut through for building the Karakorum Highway. On the edge of this *Dās* there is a flat plain where several boulders have

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been rolled down. Atmospheric action has turned them red. The plain must have been a camping ground in the past as was the camp also established by the Chinese roadbuilders in recent years. Here some three or four boulders have preserved old engravings of animals, mounted horsemen and some structures. Inscriptions in developed Brāhmī character give following names of persons :

*Kaṭihalasya i.e.* "Of Kaṭihala" ; *Śrī Devasya, I.e.* "Of Śrī Deva" ;

*Śrī Vattiśarmaṇa,* Śrī Ajaṇarmala and *Chhoṭa.* Three more signs give the word *Yorilu,* probably referring to some local deity. Another stone shows a footprint with the inscription—*Jayatu Buddhapada, I.e.* "Victorious be Buddha's footprint".

The Thak *Dās* presents a beautiful view of the Thalphan village (Plate 4), the Khinnar valley and the extensive sandy plain on the western side of the Khinnar river, which has been the main centre of rock carving in the past. It is this sandy plain which has been divided into four zones : Thalpan I is the main hillock in the immediate vicinity of the Indus river, occupying the lowest terrace, named as "hillock of the first sermon" from the fact that the scene of the first sermon is represented here ; Thalpan II is the second rock pile near the hill on the west occupying a second higher terrace, named as "Altar Rock" from the fact that the accumulation of big rocks makes some sort of a ceremonial altar ; Thalpan III is the old footpath, called "the pilgrim path" on a still higher level along the hill coming from the direction of the Khinnar valley and proceeding westward. The foot-path has been along the edge of the hill but many boulders have fallen down before and after and they contain several carvings. Three big erosions have taken place since, throwing down several boulders and pebbles from the top of the hill. Thalpan IV includes the scattered rocks in between on the plain and the distant hill rock on the east towards the Khinnar river. It is on one of these boulders that a Chinese inscription has been engraved. In the last century there was a flourishing village at the lowest terrace where Thalpan bridge has now been built. But the flood of 1841 washed away the entire village. The greenery of old cultivation is still clinging to the side of the river to speak of old habitation. Here was also an old crossing of the river Indus. At the foot of the hill, on the eastern side,beyond the plain there still exist structural remains of an old Muslim village alongwith some of the old graves. Their fields and water channels can be traced even now. This was the old village of Thalpan but has been

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completely abandoned owing to an earlier Indus flood that has spread a mantle of desert all over the plain.

The modern village of Thalpan has now been shifted to the left bank of the Khinnar river. Its fields now spread far to the east right upto the edge of an intruding ridge from behind, where a channel from the Khinnar has made cultivation possible. On this side also there are several hillocks and scattered boulders that were used by ancient man for carving. The Indus river makes an S-twist just before the Thak rivulet joins it. Right in front on the Thalpan side there is a naturally fortified place the alignment of the boulders making a circular tower. That was actually used as a bastion in the past for defence against the intruders from over the Thak side. The green fields of the Thalpan village come down to this tower and extend westward just short of the Khinnar river where a sandy patch exhausts the water. The Khinnar, after emerging from the hill, turns westward and joins the Indus before Thalpan bridge. Beyond the sandy plain (Plate 5) the lower two terraces come to an end and a gradual climb rises to about two hundred feet above the present bed of the river and we reach the third terrace, over which the old pilgrim path passed. It is here that a simple tomb enclosure of a Muslim *shahīd* (martyr), locally called *Ziārat*, the site of Ziārat I, is situated. The plain sloped down from the northern hill and is strewn all over with old broken boulders, some of which have been blackened. Many of the big boulders lie close to the edge of the terrace parallel to the Indus river. It is on them that the prehistoric carvings are seen. Higher up on the hill side clayey patch sticks on to the slope, where sometime ago a village, called Thakot, flourished. But today because of the lack of water the village has been completely abandoned.

This higher terrace has been cut by several flood torrents and made the pilgrim path very difficult to follow. These torrents are all dry today but they have subdivided the extensive *Dās* into smaller sections. After crossing three such dry beds we arrive at the second Ziārat, beyond which are scattered several boulders again containing prehistoric carvings. It is this subdivision of the *Dās* which is named as Ziārat II. Up on the hill side there is a little green patch, watered by a small spring. Another torrent leads one down to the Indus bed, where river scouring has cut through the conglomerate terrace in historic time and created a small cave. It is inside the cave and on the rock in its front that Brāhmī inscriptions of historical period have been found. Still beyond the *Dās*

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continues, with occasional breaks by more dry torrents and marked by several hilly outcrops on way to Little Khomar. Some of these boulders have been used for engraving in the historical period. They point the direction of the old pilgrim path until we reach the entrance to Big Khomar valley—a pastoral area used by shepherds for grazing animals It is at the mouth of this valley that several caves have been formed in the historical period owing to the fall of the conglomerate rocks. All of them are now used by the shepherds for shelter during inclement weather. Beyond this opens the *Dās* of Darbaṭi, which leads on to an entrant of the Indus river that has eaten away the third terrace bed and reached the very foot of the hill. Beyond the entrant starts the Hodur *Dās*, where lies the site of Hodur on the left side of the Hodur river. The *Dās* has been cut into two by the Hodur river. Eastward it spreads for miles, partly cultivated and partly barren. A modern bridge at this point gives an access from the Karakorum Highway. This Hodur *Dās* continues, with intermitent breaks by the northern hills, which intrude into the Indus river but receds again in front of the Thor village, wherefrom Thor *Dās* begins. It is here that old carvings are seen. Thereafter the hills close in, to be cut up by the river valleys of Khanberi, Didishal, Darel and Tangir. Modern bridges and jeepable roads give access into these valleys. A common bridge just before Shatial leads directly to Darel and Tangir. It is near this bridge that the last carvings on the Indus have been noted.

Coming back now to the left bank of the Indus river, we start at the point where we left before at Jayachand hill that we have seen intruding into the Indus river and on which one end of the Thalpan bridge is resting. The Karakorum Highway has broken through this hill and enabled us to see the old carvings on either side of the road. This is the site of Chilas I, which includes the sandy plain ahead, full of many rock outcrops containing old carvings. At the northern edge of the hill some agricultural farms have been developed. When these farms were being made, big burial urns are reported to have been found here. The old path ran over the Jayachand hill towards Buṭogāh-koṭ, a small village on the mouth of the Buṭogāh rivulet, on the western bank of which now spreads the city of Chilas, occupying a small portion of Harpan *Dās* which slopes towards the Indus river creating several terraces. The city (Plate 3) grades up higher and higher on these terraces and its green fields rise stage by stage right upto the very out-skirts of the habitation. Chilas is shaded by the heights of Harpan hill. The city is

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really borne and brought up by the Buṭogāh, a rivulet gushing still with flowing water and probably deriving its name from Buddha (corrupted as *But*, meaning "an idol")and *gāh*, meaning "a rivulet". It is this rivulet which nourishes the city and its fields and provides electric power for consumption. All along this rivulet there was an old path followed by the Buddhists to Babusar. Six miles away in the interior a late Brāhmī inscription on a boulder records *namo buddhāya*, *i.e.* "Salutation to Buddha." Today the upstream, with which joins the Dasar *nala*, has thick pine forest giving great economic support to the people.

The city of Chilas today has spread right on the highest terrace formed at the foot of the Harpan hill. This terrace has been cleared of old rocks and the surface bull-dozed and flattened for modern constructions. However, the old rolled boulders with carvings are still seen on the edge of the older terrace bordering Buṭogāh and also scattered lower down in the open plain near the airstrip, now hardly in use, and onward along the Chilas by-pass, which makes a double bend to reach up the high terrace because of two dry *nalas* coming down from Harpan hill. The carved boulders are seen right up to the Karakorum Highway and even beyond towards the Indus river, which flows further down about a mile to the north. The oldest city was further down the modern habitation around the bordering village of Soniwal Payin, where stands the famous Chilas Rock (No. 57), giving the old name of the city as Somanagara and recording the victory of the local ruler Śrī Vaiśravaṇasena. At Soniwal Payin we also get multiple carvings of battle-axe on boulders (Nos. 3 and 4). As the water was made available to the higher level, the later city shifted on a higher ground, where a mediaevel fort (now renewed) was built. The British restrengthened the fort. However, the British residency was built further down on the interior of Buṭogāh, firstly to enjoy a better and cooler climate and secondly to control the route that came from Babusar Pass and from Kashmir. The array of old buildings on the right bank of Buṭogāh kept the administrators aloof from the common people who continued their life in their traditional family feuds.

Harpan *Dās* spreads for miles, dry, barren and sandy. The Karakorum Highway runs along its lowest terrace about five hundred feet higher than the present bed of the Indus river. Chilas itself is 4010 feet above sea level. The *Dās* extends beyond the Highway and verges on the river, which has now receded further down making another lower terrace. The rivulet Buṭogāh is on the eastern margin of the *Dās* just touching the outcrop of Jayachand hill. It is just before the mouth of Buṭogāh that a

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new bridge has been built on the Karakorum Highway. It is here that a small hillock makes its rise and is cut up into several bits. On one upright boulder an inscription of the Parthian ruler Gondophares (1st century A.D.) and other carvings have been found. This place has been named as Gondophares Rock. At present new buildings on the Highway start from this place and go westward for nearly a mile towards the municipal barrier and checkpoint. From this barrier a tractor road winds down towards the Indus river. Carved boulders are met on way. On its lowest terrace there are hill outcrops. The easternmost one has been named as Chilas II and the westernmost Chilas III. The carvings and inscriptions are seen not only here but also on the upper terrace. The earliest historic carvings are seen at Chilas II to be followed by later carvings at Chilas III. The late carvings are also seen at the upper terrace, and hence a subdivision has been made : (a) refers to the upper terrace, and (b) to the lower terrace. It is only at terrace III (a) that some prehistoric carvings have been noted. A small dry *nala* abruptly brings these carvings to an end as boulders have smashed the terraces and underground water springs have disturbed the mouth. After crossing this disturbed area we observe a very rough surface on the upper terrace, strewn over with imbedded boulders which could be hardly used for carving. Even then a few boulders have preserved for us a few inscriptions but down on the lower sandy terrace just above the present bed of the river several boulders lie scattered and continue for about a mile. This whole area has been termed Chilas IV. It is full of carvings (Plate 12) and inscriptions of late period. Its western boundary is defined by another dry *nala*, at the mouth of which big boulders are lying in disarray. These were washed by the Indus flood water in the post-pleistocene period before the lowest terrace was formed. It is here that we find prehistoric carvings. Beyond the *nala* the boulders have very rough surface on the riverside but higher up on the upper terrace just by the side of the Karakorum Highway better surfaced boulders are available, which have been used both by prehistoric men and later comer for carving. Here we have a rich cross-section of material from prehistory to history. This is the site of Chilas V, which continues and slopes down towards the river onward. Here Harpan *Das* comes to an end, as the hills from the south show up very near. Karakorum Highway had to cut through the border of these hills. But down on the slope there are some big boulders, two of them have prehistoric carvings. One of them shows the representation of a giant man (Plate 11), and after him this place has been named "Deva" site. Some of the boulders

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were also used by later comers. Their writings of 10th-11th centuries A.D. have disfigured many carvings of the prehistoric man. Further down towards the river there are more boulders on sandy plain of the last terrace. These have been used for carving stupas, temples and inscriptions of the later period. This whole site is Chilas VI.

This last site is again broken up by a dry *nala*. Only towards the last terrace some boulders show later carvings and inscriptions near three Muslim graves. These boulders are a part of a bigger complex which is clearly seen at the mouth of the Gichi *nala*, a rivulet that still has running water brought from the upper hill behind, where it supports a thick forest going right upto Babusar. On the mouth of this rivulet there is a rough hillock cut up into pieces and weathered much at places. Some of its boulders have been rolled down to the lower terrace. It is on this hillock and on the boulders that carvings are seen. Prehistoric carvings have been noted on the top. The most important are the quartz veins that have intruded into the rocks. These have been utilized by prehistoric man whose flakes are scattered in the sand dunes around. On the side of Gichi rivulet the hill is washed away and there is a later cave formation. On the sandy slope some old pottery has been collected on the surface. One type of rim, having flat top with star design on it, suggests a type of pot known from early graves also found in Darel valley (Nos. 5 and 6). This is the site of Chilas VII. Beyond this rivulet Gichi *Dās* spreads for miles, leaving open spaces, galleries between hills and forming several terraces. It is in this *Dās* that we have, in serial order, the sites of Chilas VIII, on the right side of the Karakorum Highway, Chilas IX and Chilas X on its left side. The last two sites have mainly inscriptions of individuals and kings and very few other late carvings. It appears that these sites were camping grounds.

Still further the northern and southern hills come closer until we reach Thor rivulet, where Thor *Dās*, on both sides of the Indus river, again spreads westward. It is at the mouth of the Thor that carvings are seen. The Thor valley on the south is very extensive. It leads on the one side to Babusar and on the other to Sapat *maidān* and onward to Jalkot. The shepherds from Thor still go to this *maidān* with their herds of sheep for grazing. The Thor *Dās* is rather narrow as the hills and many boulders, brought down by recent erosion, have spead a mantle of stones on the hill slopes. Further ahead opens Minar *Dās* containing big boulders and a line of separated hillock on the right side of the Highway, which have been used for carving in the historic period. This

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is bounded by Minargāh on the west. Beyond this point the Indus gorge has hardly left any space for habitation and hence man took resort into the inner valleys. Opposite Khanberi we come to Basari *nala* coming from south and then Basho where is a checkpost. Further ahead is the Harban rivulet which opens up a green valley on the south and towards the Indus river sandstone hillocks have created some caves used by the Buddhists. Finally we come to Shatial rivulet which has a closed valley on the south but right at the point where modern bridge has been built on the Indus several boulders have important carvings of the later period. Beyond Shatial the hills close up leaving only narrow passage for the Indus river. No space is available for human habitation or even for a possible journey by foot. Hence, man, both from Harban and Shatial valleys in the past came to Thor and Chilas for their communiation and other transactions. However, when the Babusar pass was closed during winter, people used a dangerous footpath high up on the hill for passage westward to Dassu and Paṭṭan in Kohistan. The Karakorum Highway beyond Shatial has been built by sheer blasting of the mountain cliffs hanging over the Indus river. The old opening comes to an end here. Historic Chilas also ceases here. Anyone coming from Kohistan first gets a feeling of civilised life on the Indus at this point of Shatial. Similarly for those who are coming from the north across Shung-ling mountain of the Chinese travellers can reach here through Darel vallely. It is therefore no wonder that at the mouth of Shatial carvings and inscriptions of diverse origin are found. This was really an opening into the long Chilas zone.

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# APPENDIX

## Location of Sites

### A. Right Side of the Indus River

1. Thalpan I ... Hillock of First Sermon
2. Thalpan II ... Altar Rock
3. Thalpan III ... Pilgrim path along the hill
4. Thalpan IV ... Scattered rocks in the sandy plain.
5. Thalpan V ... Thalpan bridge inscriptions
6. Ziārat I ... Carvings upto the first prehistoric boulders.
7. Ziārat II ... Carvings upto the second group of prehistoric boulders.
8. Khomar ... Carvings and inscriptions beyond.

### B. Left Side of the Indus River

1. Chilas I ... Near the Thalpan bridge and Jayachand hill on either side of Karakorum Highway.
2. Gondophares Rock The hillock at the mouth of Buṭogāh.
3. Chilas II ... Two km. from the Munfcipal barrier towards the Indus river. (a) and (b).
4. Chilas III ... One hundred yards west of Chilas II upto the mouth of the first *Dās*. (a) and (b).
5. Chilas IV ... between the first and second *Dās*.
6. Chilas V ... Three km. from Municipal barrier immediately to the right of Karakorum Higway.
7. Chilas VI ... "Deva Site", Five km. from Municipal barrier
8. Chilas VII ... Gichi rivulet site.
9. Chilas VIII ... Eight km. from Municipal barrier on the right side of Karakorum Highway.
10. Chilas IX ... Nine km. from Municipal barrier on the left side of Karakorum Highway.
11. Chilas X ... Ten km. from Municipal barrier on the left side of Karakorum Highway, recording the inscription of Uvima.

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# CHAPTER II

## PREHISTORIC CHILAS

More and more evidence is everyday accumulating through exploration to throw new light on the early life history of Chilas. The most outstanding is a group of archaic engravings that distinguish them clearly from the later carvings. These older engravings are deeper, primitive, and some of them blackened and even patinated due to climatic action in comparison to later carvings that are bolder, have firm lines, and stand out clearly with new facial expressions, dress, equipment and even subject matter. Yet the archaic pictures cannot be said to be crude or children's scribblings. They are products of keen observation and bold imagination. Particularly the portrayal of animals, whether in outline or with solid filled-in body through the techinque of pecking with a sharp pointed tool, is more naturalistic and shows a spirited action on their part. The humans, on the other hand, make a poor comparison as the face could not be reproduced in its true form. These archaic pictures are technically related and have a common theme of hunting, suggesting that the latter was the chief means of livelihood of the people.

Today hunting is rare in Chilas as the mountain slopes that dangerously slope down towards the Indus river are denuded of all forest. The main jungle is today seen in the innermost recesses of the valleys that converge on the Babusar top in the south or recede into the Darbaṭi valley in the north which overlooks the the forested belt of the Khinnar valley. As Chilas gets today only four inches of rainfall in a year, the

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slopes and the hills are dry and naked, except those spots which get water from the springs or small rivulets. One such spot is Chilas town (Plate 3) proper which has become green with fields. The remaining areas are sandy and pebbly, the sand being blown from the river and the pebbles being hurled down from mountain tops or brought by several small rivulets that join the Indus river. Particularly the northern slope is today absolutely dry. As a result Chilas is very hot in summer, heat being reflected from the dry rocky hills and sands. But that was not so in the past. Cultivable soil is seen on both banks of the river Indus. Beneath the veneer of sand there is also old soil which is capable of vegetal growth if water is made available. The slopes on either side of the river are not only strewn over with pebbles and stone bats but big boulders have also rolled down from mountain top and are now concentrated on several places on older terrace of the river. Such boulders appear to have come down with the melting of the snow that must have been more than what appears now in winter. It is their water currents that have cut several rivulets, some of which have now become dry, or get very little water. The Indus itself has cut down its bed more than hundred feet lower than its high bank. The geographical condition in the post glacial period suggests that the hill slopes had more water and hence were forested and consequently better soothing climate prevailed than what it is today. It was therefore natural that animals like ibexes and markhors wandered freely in this part and facilitated hunting by man. In fact *yak*, which is now seen in the higher altitude of the Karakorum Range, was, also hunted here, as is clear from an engraving (no. 14).

It is these big boulders that lie flat on the higher and older terrace of the Indus river, which attracted the attention of early man and were used for engraving by him. The man sat on the sandy bank and wandered in the forested slopes, particularly the terraces formed by the numerous rivulets, now dry, in search of animals. It is in the sand that the quartz flakes are often found. So far no cave or rock shelter of such an early period has been found. It seems that man lived in open air sites but for the purpose of raw material he must have looked for quartz veins in different hills. One such quartz outcrop has been identified in the split rock near the mouth of Gichi *nala* (Chilas VII). At random selection of a few tools on the site and those recovered from the sand suggest that flakes were chipped from core to make microlithic tools, all of them non-geometric, making a collection of points, scrapers

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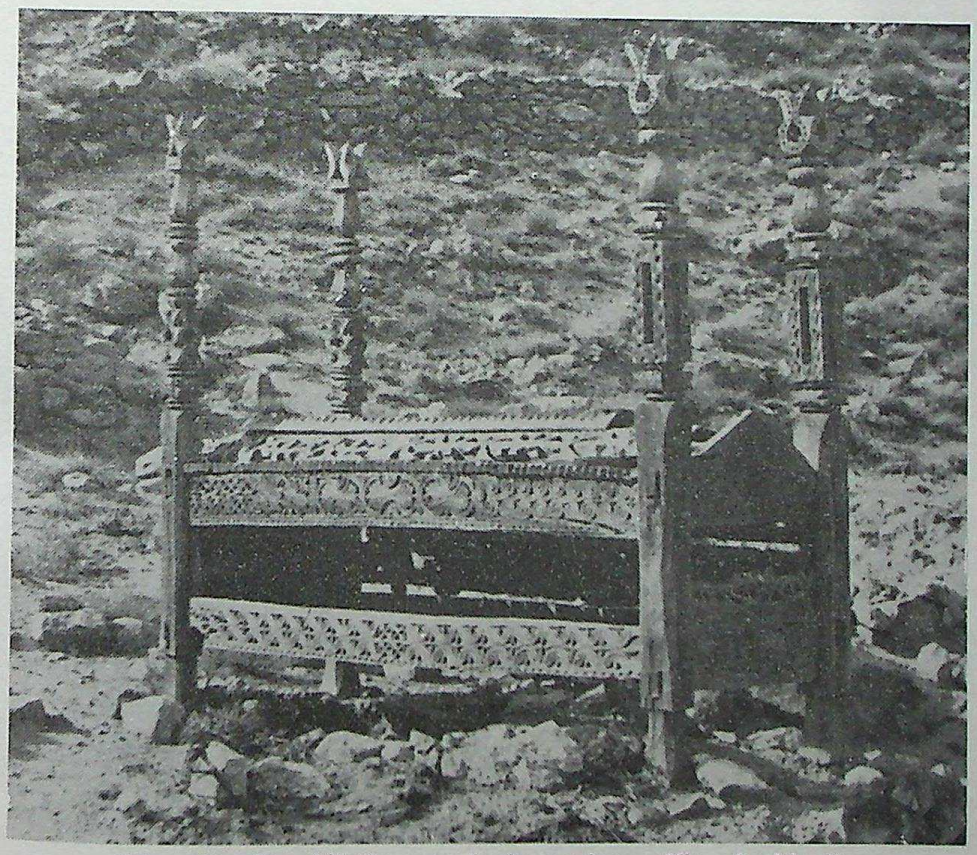
No. 1. Thalpan bridge : City name Vīra Somonagara.



No. 2. Darel Valley : typical wooden coffin of a Muslim grave copying the old style.

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and some triangles. Large flakes, and some in triangular shape, have also been recovered. No proper arrowhead has so far been found. The general feature of the tools suggest mesolithic hunters and the earliest dating of such people should fall late in the holocene period, sometime around 5000 to 3000 B.C. However, such mesolithic hunters survived right into the historic period. The evidence available today does not make for a separate neolithic stage although domestication of dog (no. 9) and of sheep (no. 20) is well attested very early in their life. Similarly representation of humped bull (no. 31) suggests a communication with the plains area in the south where bull had been common from a very early time. A later representation of a mounted horseman from the Ziārat site in the same archaic style is exceptional. This must have been borrowed from the north not earlier than first millennium B.C. At one place on a higher terrace than Chilas III there is a group of three boulders showing animals and birds in outline (no. 11). Among them we can recognise Chakor bird, stag and a peculiar style of ibex. The representation of these animals clearly prove the long continuity of mesolithic living tradition and emphasises on the isolation of the human community that subsisted on the animal produce which local conditions could provide. How far other food material supplemented the diet of the people is premature to say at present.

The two animals hunted and profusely represented in the engravings are ibex and markhor. Today both these animals are rare in this part because for a continuously long time they have been hunted here for food. The ibex is a variety of wild goat that wandered in the mountains here. It is recognisable by its double curved horns that bend gently behind the head. The animal has become popular in local tradition. Its horns were kept on the graves as a symbol of protection until very recent time. The other animal, markhor, has straight twisted horns upward and is probably a local variety of reindeer. Apart from these two animals we also get bear, stag, sheep, fox and dog in the carvings. Eagle is also seen with outstretched wings. The *chakor* bird is very common even today.

The only weapon represented in the engravings is a kind of simple bow. It is shown by a vertical line to which an arrow is fixed at right angle in the middle. At the shooting end the arrow appears to have a flaked quartz point. Another representation of bow shows a curved stick, to which sinew was tied as a string in order to pull the arrow. The presence of scrapers suggest the scraping of the skin. Some of the humans have ovalish shape of the body and between their legs the hanging

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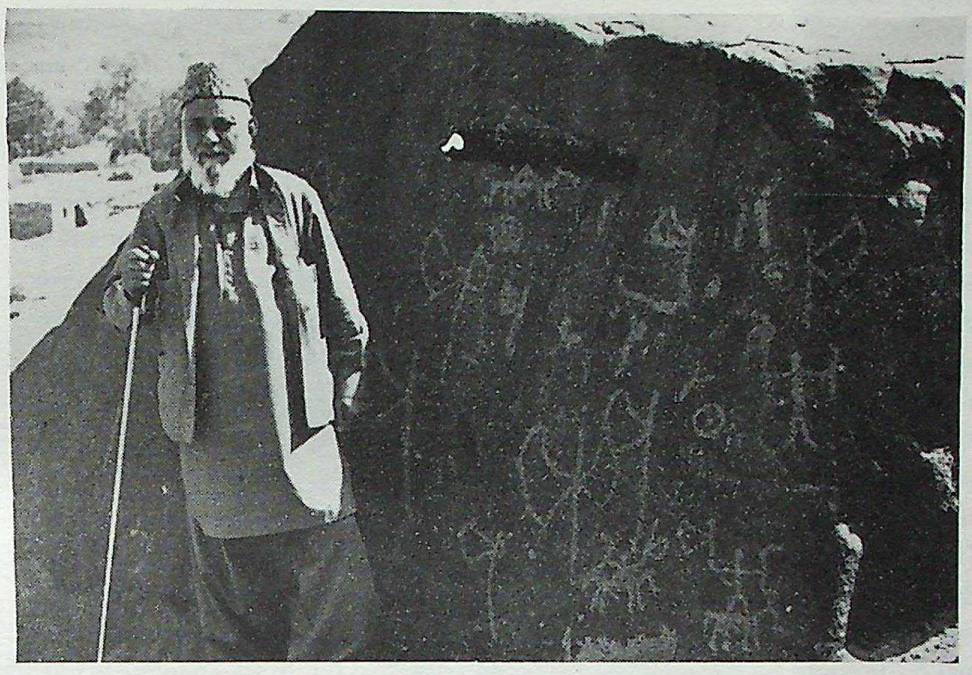

No. 3. Soniwal Payin : Mr. Abdul Hamid Khawar standing by the side of a boulder showing battle-axes and horse-riders.

No. 4. Soniwal Payin : Battle-axes, animals and humans carved on a boulder.

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object appears to be a tail. But such a representation is so common that some would like to take them for male organ. In that case the humans should be naked but that does not appear to be so in all the cases. However female representation is rare.

In two examples representation of chequered motif (no. 36) on rock looks like a fisherman's net but such a net is hardly possible at this early stage. On the other hand some sort of a reed fencing is not unthinkable as is the practice even today. The boulders, on which engravings are done, no doubt attracted the attention of these people. Some of them certainly provided shelter. In other examples some of the boulders make a rough circle enclosing a heap of small pebbles inside. Whether they make stone circles enclosing a grave remains to be proved by actual excavation. In some examples the rock shelters also contain a jumble of pebbles and small stones but nothing else has so far been discovered. There is a possibility that the dead body was left exposed under these shelters. However, in a number of examples a sort of a seat or an enclosure is made by dry pebble masonry. What was the purpose of this seat ? It could be for resting as it is done today by local shepherds but it could as well be for ritual purpose if these big boulders were held in some reverence.

In several places these boulders show impressions of palm (no. 18) and foot (no. 19). The palm is usually of the right hand because out of the five fingers represented the thumb is on the right. The wrist part of the palm is rounded and the whole palm is filled in solid by pecking. Each finger is distinctly shown. Such palm prints are common throughout the prehistoric world but here they continued right into the historic period and are seen by the side of the Buddhist stupas. The foot is generally shown in outline but there are quite a few examples in which they are also shown solid. The toes are not represented at all. But in few examples a line is drawn in between suggesting that the toe part was separate. Only in one example a dot is placed in the middle of the foot recalling the auspicious mark on Buddha's foot. Usually only one foot is shown. It is very rare that the pair of feet appear. In the case of the foot no distinction of right or left has been made.

Human beings have also received full attention on the part of these prehistoric artists but the humans are shown in the simplest form except in some divine cases, discussed below. The natural form of man is not portrayed but sufficient details are given to recognise the forms as human.

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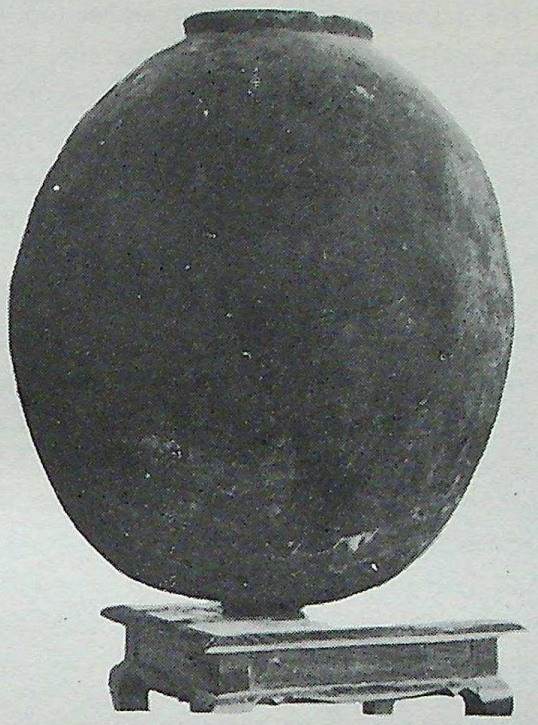

No. 5. Manikyal (Darel Valley) : A burial urn, 1st millennium B.C.

No. 6. Darel Valley (Manikyal) : Flat rim fragments of an urn.

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The artists were interested, not so much in the formal form, but in the man in action. He is caught not only as an archer (no. 8) alone shooting an animal but also in twos (no. 9) and in groups. (no. 12), all participating in group hunting. On the other hand men in twos and threes (no. 23) go round and round perhaps in a cheering game. They are sometimes shown running one after the other. But the most loving scene is of a man catching the hand of a child in a spirit of filial adventure (no. 24). The other scene is still more interesting (no. 26) in which two serpents are biting the leg of a man who is lifting up a child with his left hand and perhaps shouting at another who is jumping up. Such social scenes speak of the ties of family spirit. On the other hand there are two significant symbols. In an example of group hunting something like an altar with two horns (no. 13) on its top has also been figured. Could this have a magical significance and represent a religious deity ? At least in one example a hunter (no. 14), who has shot an ibex, is putting on horns on his head. A second symbol makes a rough dome (no. 27) resting on a base with four circles on a stem decorating its side and top. The symbol is known outside but what is the meaning in this context is difficult to say ?

There are some human representations which are of unusual significance. They are not of the same date but they speak of the continuity of tradition among such people. The simplest is the rough outline of the human body (no. 32) in a rectangular shape with rounded head on top, hands extended sideways with fist closed, legs are straight down but with a depression for the knee and ankle and a curve for the calf, and feet closed but they are tied witn a senewy string and are separate and turned sideways. Between the legs a line probably represent the male organ. On the body of the figure a bird is drawn later, at which a man is shooting from the right side.

A second example shows a geometric form with body and legs shaped by a cross and the hair standing above (on the extreme left of no. 17). Four points are marked at the meeting of the cross. Here also the legs are apart. This second figure is elaborated in another example (no. 34), in which the body shows the same cross design with dots. The hair are also bristling overhead. To this body two hands are attached straight down at an incline. The hands show distinctly five fingers. A snake is going out of the left arm. Does this represent a snake god ? But again below the body two legs taper down jointly in a

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No. 7. Darel Valley : A stone plaque showing Vishṇu and elephant, 8th-9th century A.D.

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style of art so well known from the terracotta figurines of Gandhāra Grave Culture and also from Charsada—the so-called "baroque ladies"—in terracotta. In this case the feet, which are joined, are also shown sideways in a fashion that they give the appearance of a boat. Does this mean that the figure represents a river god ? When we note that such prehistoric carving are seen on both banks of the river, the concept of a river god is not impossible. There is also another picture. (no. 16) which shows seven persons carrying a long wooden structure. The structure shows two long logs of wood, between which smaller pieces are tied in a fashion giving to it the shape of a wooden raft-a type even now used by the local people for crossing the Indus river. The other type of boat is not used here at all.

Of still more developed form is the representation of a big man (Plate. 11)—a giant man (*Deva*) indeed—again with his body squarish and filled-in solid, hair bristling overhead, hands extended sideways, the legs properly shaped down with the feet, having all the toes, turned sideways and apart but tied by a string. He is putting on a loin cloth. This was originally a male, but to which breasts with nipples were later applied to the body, a tail is added below and five or six dots are marked near about the knee. Such a giant human representation, with no attribute of a later Buddhist or Hindu iconography, evidently points to a conception of a divine figure in the mind of such prehistoric people.

It would be wrong to say that such a well formed human representation could be early in date. On the other hand the style of the conjoint legs and the geometric shape of the body recall terracotta figures of second millennium B.C. On the other hand we have got solid body (no. 22) made up in a bitriangular style—a style so well known in metal from Tepe Hissar dating to third millennium B.C. Such a bitriangular form of the body is seen in another example (no. 23), in which the hands make a bracket and inside two dots are shown probably to represent eyes. This style is known in the trans-Pamir region and could be dated to 3rd or 4th millennium B.C. Similar bitriangularism is also seen in the case of some animals (no. 25) which have solid bodies. There are also animals which are drawn just in outline (no. 8) and so are the humans in linear form. Such primitive characterisation of man and animal, particularly in the case of the animals, where the legs are hardly shown but they merge in animal's fat body, is a common scene in hunting representation and group dancing. On the other hand there is a type (no. 10)

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No. 8. Ziārat II : A man hunting an ibex.

No. 9. Ziārat II : Two hunters shooting an ibex, a dog, and palm and foot impressions.

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where the legs are lounging and the body is blobby, solidly filled, either elongated or fattish, giving the appearance of some covering over the body and head and hence the face is not shown. It is in these examples that the lengthened line between the legs could be a tail. If this is acceptable, such humans may have animal skin on their body. Such figural representation may be very early in date and the oldest may be placed in the fifth millennium B.C.

As far as the present exploration goes, there are two main concentrations of these archaic carvings, one set is on the left bank of the river Indus converging on the Deva site (Chilaṣ VI) spreading from the higher terrace in the vicinity of Chilas IIIa westward to Chilas VIII, a little beyond the Gichi *nala*. Professor Jettmar's exploration has located some carvings of this type even in Thor and Shatial. The other concentration is on the right bank of the river Indus, mainly in the vicinity of the two Muslim *Ziārats*, graves of Muslim *shahīds* (martyrs), who are known to have died in battle against the Sikhs in the last century. But occasional carvings start eastward and go further west on isolated boulders where they lie under the later carvings of the Buddhists and Battle-Axe men. Still ahead beyond Darbaṭi and the Indus re-entrant, some rocks stand near the village of Hodur. Here again several carvings have been noted that are related to the archaic drawings. Their detailed study still remains to be done. On either side of the Indus river several small rivulets that got water in the past have cut up the terraces. Most of these rivulets are now dry. They were actually torrents as they brought water in great force and hence rolled down big boulders from hill top. But as most of them are now dry, they are locally called *Gāh* or *Dās*. It is generally near their mouth that these archaic carvings are found, suggesting that perhaps the prehistoric men hunted animals, not on the bank of the Indus river but along the valleys of these rivulets. It is the big boulders that have been selected for engraving. The hill rock surface has been rarely used by such people.

Palm and foot impressions (no. 18) are very common at almost all the sites in Chilas on both sides of the Indus. One group is found at Thalpan III, a little higher up above the Altar Rock. The boulder, which is patinated blue, is broken into three parts. The carvings are seen in the left two parts. Six palm impressions are in the middle. On the top right of the middle part an animal, probably a dog, is seen behind a footprint. One foot is solid and so are the palms, the fingers of which are

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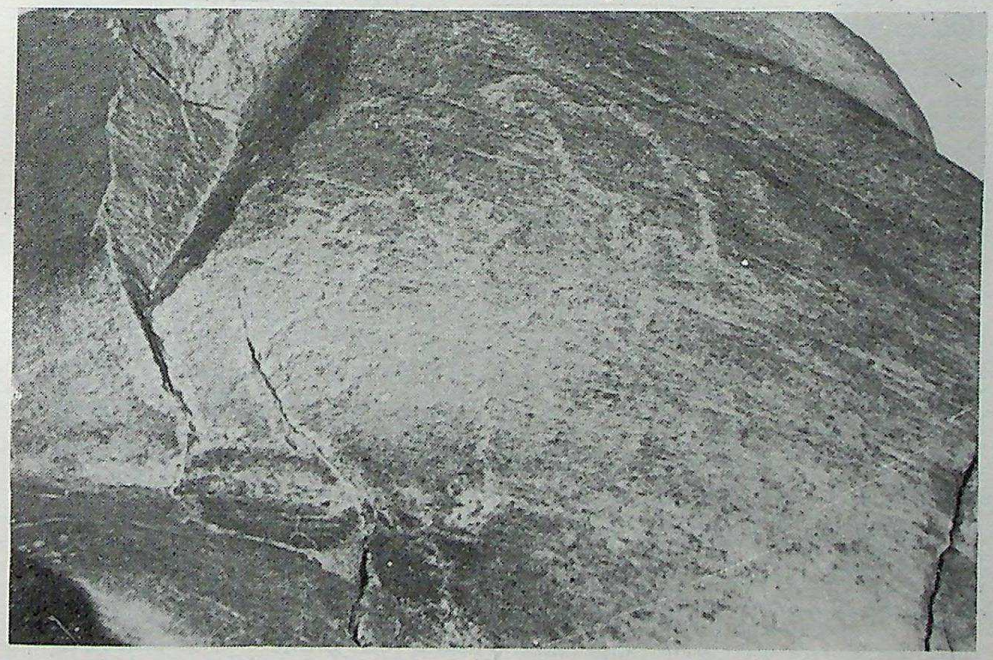
No. 10. Chilas II : Prehistoric carvings of humans, animals and birds below later inscriptions.



No. 11. Chilas IIIa : Mother bird feeding a baby bird.

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clearly shown. The other foot is in outline. The little animal is also solid. As we proceed towards Ziārat I, on way there is a boulder which has two foot-prints, filled-in solid. Further ahead there is another boulder showing two foot-prints, one of big size and another of small size. On reaching Ziārat I we see a pile of boulders towards the river on its old high bank. Here are two big boulders which have archaic carvings. One of them has two faces, eastern and western. On the eastern face (no. 22) of this rock we have, besides human figures, one foot-print in outline at the bottom left, and in the middle three foot-prints of the same type and three palm prints, one solid and two in outline, and on the right is a pair of foot-prints in outline. In Ziārat II we have a second concentration of archaic engravings. First we get a boulder with bull and other impression (no. 31). Here we have two solid palm impressions, both of which have the wrist cut straight. The fingers of the left palm is spread out. We have also a foot-print in outline with five toes shown clearly. The depiction suggests a late engraving. Next we come to a boulder (no. 30) which shows three markhors in the middle chased by two dogs. On the top there is a broad palm impression in outline with small fingers. On the left there is a foot-print in outline, having two horizontal lines probably to separate the toes and the sole. Another boulder has its two faces engraved. On one face (no. 9), showing a hunting scene of two hunters, we have, on the top, a solid palm impression with rounded wrist and two foot-prints in outline, both having a horizontal line in the middle separating the sole. On the other face (no. 18) we have five solid palm impressions, besides late signs, and one solid foot-print. Another big boulder (no. 12) has several scenes. On the top there is a pair of foot-prints in outline. It was later filled by horizontal lines and one of them has an additional vertical line. A boulder (no. 32), showing a big man with outstretched hands has palm prints in outline to the left of the figure (not in this picture). After crossing a *Dās* we come to another boulder showing a palm impression and to the left a footprint beside an animal. Further ahead a boulder has a palm impression besides circles. A nearby boulder has a foot-print on one face. After crossing two more dry rivulets we come to a place, where we have a Sogdian inscription, a boulder shows later palm impressions and a foot-print.

Coming now to the left bank of the Indus river, we walk over the boulders and reach the site of Chilas IV at the mouth of a rivulet. Here

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No. 12. Ziārat II : Three hunting scenes below late carvings.

No. 13. Ziārat II : Group hunting of an ibex.

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several archaic engravings are seen. Among them we have a pair of foot-prints, two palm impressions and two more foot-prints. At Chilas V by the roadside there are several boulders with these impressions. One has two foot-prints, one being in the reverse direction of the other. Another has a solid palm impression and one foot-print in outline. Still another has, on one face, one palm impression and two foot-prints. Its other face has twelve foot-prints, all in outline. A neighbouring boulder has several solid palm prints, but one in outline and one foot-print with a dot in the middle and a horizontal line above to separate the toes. The next one has twelve foot-prints in outline. A later ibex is drawn on one foot-print. In Chilas VI a solid palm impression is seen to the right of the giant man (plate. 11), and a foot-print to his left (not seen in the photograph). In Chilas VII near the Muslim graves there is a palm impression mixed up with later carving. In Chilas VIII only one foot-print has been observed on a boulder.

The next group of engraving, is the hunting scene that has been a popular and important occupation in Chilas until very recent time. Hunting was the chief means of livelihood for several millennia and hence great attention was paid to it. The simplest form (no. 8) is represented in Ziārat site II, in which a single man is drawing his bow with the aim at an ibex standing before him face to face. The position of the man's legs shows the force that he is putting on to the work. But the ibex, with its double curved horns and short curved tail, is standing unawares. It is depicted plumpy with body outined and the legs shortened. On another boulder at the site we have a different scene (no. 9) of markhor hunted by two hunters with a dog chasing. The hunters are drawn in simple line but both of them have pulled the arrows beyond their ears. The bow is a simple straight stick but the arrow clearly shows the flaked point at the head. The markhor has its two horns twisted up and its body is hardly different from that of the ibex and shown in the same fashion of outline. The legs are extremely short. The dog above has its tail curved up and is shown in a single line. Above we have a palm and two foot impressions. Are these impressions in any way connected with hunting ? At least the presence of dog is significant. The way the dog is helping the hunters makes it obvious that it has been domesticated. The dog plays an important role in the life of these people. In another picture (no. 14) from Ziārat II three dogs are chasing a yak, which is depicted with double curved horns. Below, a hunter with horns on his head has already released

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No. 14. Ziārat II : Horned hunter, dogs and other animals.

No. 15. Ziārat II : A hunter with two dogs.

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the arrow at an animal which has fallen. The bow of the horned man is shown by a semicircle. In another picture (no. 30) from the same site an actual fight between three dogs and three markhors is shown. The dogs are closing and barking at them but the markhors, two below and one on the top, are angrily set at them. Two more dogs on the right are looking back but probably in retreat. One man is running down from the left top (not in the picture) as if to stop this fight. In between are a palm impression and a foot-print probably with the same object of some sacred blessing. There is another remarkable scene (no. 15), which shows a hunter, beside men carrying a raft, shooting at a markhor which is dangerously threatening two dogs barking at it. Nearby another dog is barking at another markhor going in another direction. Here fhe hunter has been accommodated in a small space available between the animal and the other scene at the left. On the same boulder (no. 12) there are two more hunting scenes on the right. The lower one shows two hunters with their horns bent trying to tackle ibexes and three markhors but only one of them seems to have been hit. The other (no. 13) is a graphic scene of group hunting, in which the help of a horned emblem is sought. There are at least two ibexes, one of them is very fat with hardly any legs at all. Two persons are busy with arrows and bows but others are throwing stones at them. Probably they are holding stone tools. In between some dots perhaps represent stone tools again. This is a realistic representation of a social hunt. On the left bank of the river Indus at the site of Chilas VI, on a boulder next to that of giant man, there are hunting scenes on the eastern as well southern faces of the rock. On the eastern face below the later writing is a hunting scene (no. 10) of ibex and markhor, in which one man has a bow and the other has stones in his raised hands. One dog in the middle joins the team. There are also two eagles with wide-spread wings probably in the act of coming down to the ground. Both the animals are shown in outline. On the other face (no. 25) the ibexes are plenty. Markhors are seen at the bottom. Some of the markhors have solid bitriangular body. A dog helps a man armed with arrows and bow. On the right hand corner there is another hunting scene in which a man is shooting with arrow and bow. He is also helped by dogs.

Serpent appears to have been a great nuisance in this part as it is shown in several engravings. As it is seen wild with other animals on a

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No. 16. Ziārat II : A raft carried by seven persons.

No. 17. Chilas V : Prehistoric humans above late carvings of a worshipper before a stūpa.

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rock it is generally represented by a wavy line with a thickened head end. As hood of the snake is never shown, it is unlikely that cobra was meant. But it must be a jumping snake as can be gathered from a representation (no. 24), in which snake is biting the thigh of a human who is trying to run away. On the other hand flying nature of the snake can be gathered from another figure (no. 28) in which the snake is biting the neck of a human. There is a second example (no. 29) of this scene on the right top of the rock. Still more realistic picture is given on a rock (no. 24) in which a man is grappling with a snake. The man has been able to catch the snake by hand but only by its tail and hence the snake succeeded in biting him at the leg. The classic example is observed on another rock (no. 26) in which two snakes are biting a man who has saved two childern, one on his right and another on his left. We have also got animals (no. 33) having their turn with snakes. One example shows a python approaching a lamb. Later in the figures of the historic period we find a snake (no. 49) having two heads at either end. In another example two snakes are shown face to face when the lions appear to pounce upon them There is also an example in which a snake bites the leg of a goat. In another example (no. 33) a sheep is fighting with a snake. When so many snake carvings are given, it is but natural that the humans should think of a better remedy. Earlier it has been argued that anthropomorphic figure (no. 34), from whose left arm a snake goes out, appears to have some connection with a magical concept surrounding a snake. Whether this figure is actually a snake god is difficult to say as he combines many other features. But in view of the importance of the *Nāga* cult in neighbouring Kashmir, it is not unreasonable to infer that snake must have formed a part of some divine concept.

At Chilas V, where we have later carvings and inscriptions there is a small pile of rocks, which show, under the later carving several impressions of palm and foot, as already discussed. There is no hunting scene nor any snake bite represented here. On the other hand we find here five human individuals (no. 17, all the figures not very clear in the picture), all shown in different style and are engraved very deep. On the extreme left two figures show geometric forms. The left figure is a simpler version of the so-called "river god" minus boat-like feet. In this example the body together with legs is formed by two isoceles triangles meeting at the apex with their base lines vertical. The lower parts make the legs and the upper, joined by a horizontal line, with

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No. 18. Ziārat II : Palm and foot impressions.

No. 19. Chilas V : Palm and foot impressions.

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hair standing upward. Four dots at the meeting of the triangles may represent the detail of the face. The right hand figure is again formed by two triangles meeting at a point but the base lines are horizontally placed. The upper line shows a curve in the middle for the head and has simple line attachments for hands. The third figure has solid body formed by a triangle with its base shoulder supporting a rounded head and throwing down hands at an incline. The legs are an extension, but in a thickened way, of the other two sides of a triangle downward but have horizontal feet attached at the lower ends. The fourth figure is a very simple single line depiction of a human with hands, legs and head. The last figure has rectangular solid body, angular head on a wide shoulder, hands stretched down at an incline and the legs with feet in a pose of walking. What is the purpose of representing these five figures in different ways ? When they are seen in the context of palm impressions and foot-prints in the neighbouring rocks, their deeper meaning could be better imagined than described. In any case the sanctity of this boulder pile, in the prehistoric period, is beyond any doubt.

Chilas IVb site represents a typical place of hunting. A small rivulet, at present completely dry, comes from the south to meet the Indus river. Big boulders have been pushed down from the top. The force of the rivulet in the past was so great that it has broken through a small rocky hillock, which was once an upper terrace of the Indus river. Beyond this hillock the Indus now has a steep descent. On the smooth surface of the boulders and rocks the prehistoric man chose to engrave his own drawings. They are scattered in several places. A study of the carvings shows the typical pattern of human living at that time. On a steep rock towards the *Dās*, at the bottom, we first see a hunting scene in which a solid filled ibex, running to right, is being chased by two humans, who have nothing in their hands except stones. The humans are all males, with their male organ clearly indicated. It seems that such an ibex was spotted in the *Dās* itself. A little above, to the left, is another important scene (no. 35), where we see two humans, the right one with filled-in elongated body and hands and legs in a running posture. The left one, with broad filled-in body, has his legs slightly bent in a posture of slow movement. To their left is a netted pattern, better seen in another picture (no. 36). Apparently it looks like a fisherman's net but it seems that it was a reed fence built to delimit the place of habitation. In the next row a typical individual is represented. His

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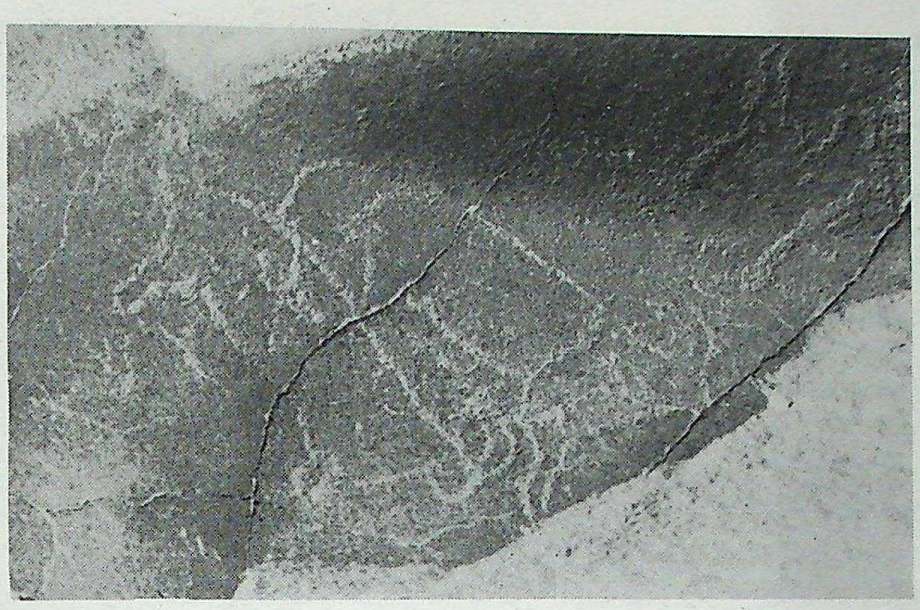
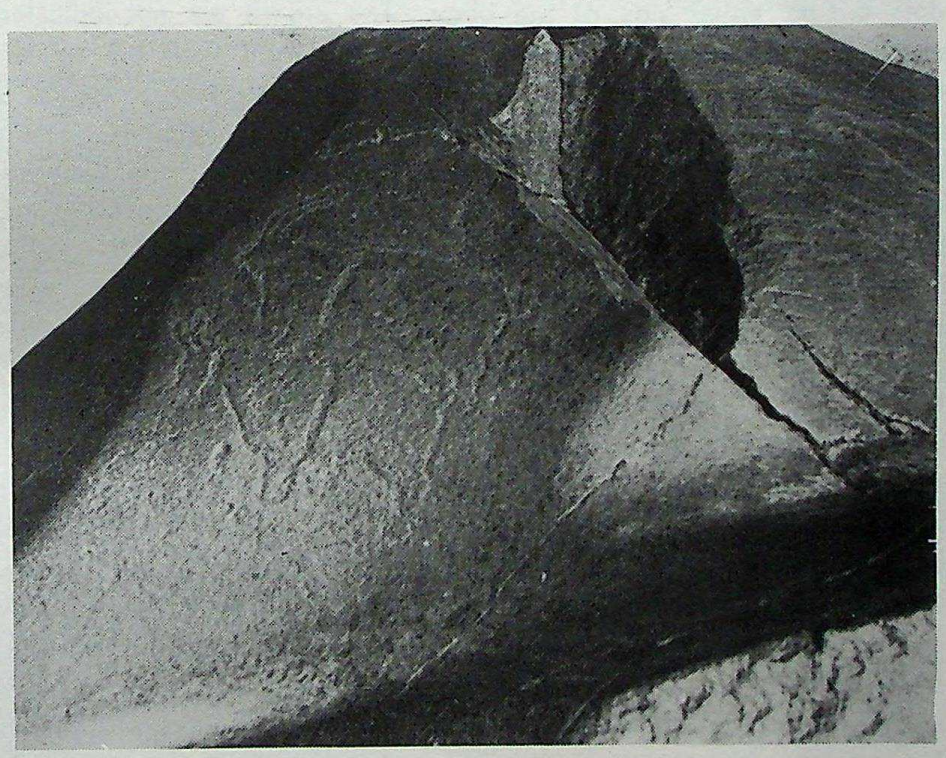


No. 20. Chilas IIIa : One sheep over another.



No. 21. Chilas IIIa : One sheep over another.

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body makes an elongated solid rectangle with rounded head on top. The hands, which are inclined down, show the five fingers. The legs, which are curved, end in feet turned sideways. The lengthened line in between the legs probably emphasizes the male organ. On either side of his head a dot is marked, the meaning of which is not clear. To his left two more humans in the same style are engraved. Below the right man is a foot impression of the left foot in outline. Then comes a peculiar scene (no. 37) of the humans, one of a bigger size and the right one of a smaller size both apparently in a half sitting pose. Although they are apparently shown side by side, their organs appear to have been joined by a curved line. Is this an attempt to show human copulation ? To the left of this scene is another netted pattern of the same design as seen before. Another boulder (no. 38) shows two human individuals standing side by side. The left one is a tall figure and his body is bitriangular. The right one is smaller. The upper part makes a triangle. This second figure has two dots, one on either side of the body. The organs are not indicated at all. But comparing the smaller figure on the right with the smaller figure of the earlier picture it appears that here attempt is made to show a female. If this is so, the dots may represent breasts. Another boulder shows a pair of foot-prints, the central line of which is common. A little further away two humans, hand in hand, are freely moving. The typical scene of a man bitten by a snake at the foot is engraved on another boulder. There are two more boulders showing standing humans with their elongated rectangular body filled-in solid. The head is again rounded. Another boulder shows a sort of a ladder. Further ahead we have two more foot-prints and one palm impression of the right hand with the palm filled-in solid. This repertoire probably represents a small family group, having the usual sanctity attached to palm and foot impressions, but living in an enclosed area of a rocky defile on the usual animal hunt. In this case the hunt is done by means of flaked stones. The representation of a ladder is mysterious because that does not play any significant role in the life of such people. If the size of male and female individuals has any meaning, it may indicate greater prominence given to its male in the social life. The style of the engraver, although following the general archaic system, is slightly different from othors. The humans are here shown with elongated, rectangular and solid body with the heads rounded. The legs are curved and the hands, in some cases, show fingers. The animals are larger in size and the subject

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No. 22. Ziārat I : Humans, palm and foot impressions.

No. 23. Ziārat II : Humans hand in hand.

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matter is widened.

At Chillas IIIa there is another group of animals and birds that show a still different style of workmanship. Here all of them are shown in linear representation. They are concentrated in two places of the older high terrace. One has two carved boulders and the other, about a hundred yards to the west. has a single carved boulder. In the first place the western boulder has only one animal on the surface facing south-east. The animal, whose body is shown in outline, with a short tail, two short curved horns, a small mouth having two hair indicating beard, two short legs, an eye in the middle, is probably a mother sheep facing a snake which has twisted its head forward. The udder of the sheep is shown by a convex line near the hind leg. The tail makes a small triangle. The western face of this very boulder shows a dreadful scene. An innocent baby sheep moves on the top. Behind follows a huge serpent, probably a python, with the intent of devouring the sheep. The snake has its body twisted and the dreadful head is pushed forward with a force. The second boulder has more lively representation. The eastern face shows a deer, at the bottom left, looking right, with its horns bent. The body which has a short curved tail, is shown in outline. It appears to be in the act of jumping. Above is a herd of sheep all making for the left direction. More than a dozen sheep are shown in four rows, each row having different numbers, the animals jostling wih one another to move forward. Probably a mother sheep is leading them. All the sheep are shown in outline, with short horns, small tail and only two legs, the other two being concealed. The whole representation is a remarkable study of the animals in perspective. On the top surface of this boulder there is a mother sheep in the middle, looking left, with long beards, short horns, small tail, standing by the side of a rectangular structure with little uprights at the two ends. On the other side of this structure towards the bottom is a lamb facing the mother in a fond love. Above the mother sheep there is another lamb, looking left, standing below another structure which has bent entrance on the side. All the sheep show a vertical line in the middle of the body. This appears to be an example of the domestication of sheep although no human is shown here.

In the second place a single boulder has similar engravings on its eastern, western and top surface. The top surface shows a baby sheep looking at the river. Down below are two large sheep (no. 21), one on

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No. 24. Ziārat II : Humans in groups.

No. 25. Chilas VI : a hunter and animals.

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the top of the other, the lower one fatter and female as the udder is shown. They have a vertical line in the middle of the body but the baby sheep does not have it. It seems that the two large sheep are attempting for copulation. On the western face again there are three sheep. On the top is a baby sheep running to left. The two other large sheep (no. 20) are below, one on the top of the other, probably in the same attempt of copulation. They have vertical line in the middle of their body. The eastern face shows dry branches of a tree. On the topmost branch is a baby bird (probably a *Chakor*) (no. 11) sitting. On another branch the mother bird is sitting, with its beak open, apparently feeding the baby bird. On the ground an animal, probably a dog, is represented. Still below there are more faint pictures probably of sheep.

All these boulders show a particular style of art. The choice of the subject is special to the artist. There is no doubt that the living scene is that of a domesticated nature in which sheep, birds and dog play a major role. As no human beings are shown here at all, the engravings make a separate group by themselves. They are certainly earlier than all the Buddhist carvings. The deep engravings bring them in the same chronological fix as the other archaic drawings. However, as the hunting life is not seen here, it seems that the living condition had gone a stage further than that of simple mesolithic hunters. The sheep rearing had now become an important occupation of life. The pictorial representation brings into view a pattern of living that is so well known today in this part, where the herders take the animals into the valleys, like that of Darbaṭi, and spend the whole summer along with their flocks and dogs.

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# CHAPTER III

## HISTORIC CHILAS

The popular history of Chilas is wrapped in the legends of Shīn, Yashkun and Kamin. Of these the Kamins, who are practically landless labourers, are relegated to the lowest class. The Shinf and the Yashkun are the land-owning sections, and though the superiority is claimed by the first, there has been recurrent struggle for the ownership of land between the two. However, in recent history there has been a penetration of the Pashtuns from Swat and beyond, and some of them have imperceptibly become landowners and they have almost merged in the local traditional system by adopting the local Śiṇā language and custom. The Pashtun influence is felt more and more as we go westward. On the other hand the advent of Islam into Chilas is again ill documented. The complete hold of the Sunnite Islam in this region makes the history of Islamic penetration here different from that of Gilgit, Hunza, Nagir and Baltistan. Here the history of Islamic movement is linked more with the west and with the Hazara plain than with Kashmir. In the wake of Islam came Sayyids and some missionaries, a few of them became early martyrs (*shahīds*). Graves of five such *shahīds* are still held with veneration at Phuguch in Darel valley. As no old Muslim monuments have so far been traced and as the Muslims are not known to have engraved on stones, it is difficult to give a true picture of their connected history. However, a comparison of family traditions and genealogies, combined with an analysis of the traditional system, is likely to throw some light on this

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issue. One thing is clear that the system here, which was different from the monarchy of Gilgit and of the other parts of the Northern Areas of Pakistan, was tribal, almost family-based and hence no royal genealogy is expected here. The only relieving factor of history is the occasional contacts which these people maintained with their neighbours. It is these contacts—political, military or otherwise—which will stand as cross-checks in historical reconstruction.

This popular history was much improved in the nineteenth century when several British officials had an opportunity to visit the area and record their observations. As the century was marked by the discovery of Indo-European family of languages, the same linguistic spirit created the Dardic group of languages and under its influence the word "Dardistan" was coined. Major J. Biddulph has aptly remarked: "Dr. Leitner[1] was the first to bring into prominent notice the existence of an Aryan race of great ethnological interest in these remote valleys. His scanty opportunities, however, have caused him to fall into the error of believing that the tribes which he has classed under the name of Dard are all of the same race, and he has applied the term of Dardistan, a name founded on a misconception, to a tract of country inhabited by several races, speaking distinct languages, who differ considerably amongst themselves. As, however, there is no one name which will properly apply to the peoples and countries in question, it will be perhaps convenient to retain the names of Dard and Dardistan when speaking collectively of the tribes and the countries they inhabit"[2]. Since then for the Europeans the history has centered round the terms "Dard" and "Dardistan" although Biddulph himself preferred to name his book *"Tribes of the Hindookoosh"*. Yet he has devoted one full chapter[3] to "Dardistan" and noted, "Under the convenient term of Dardistan have been included the whole of the valleys lying between the Western Punjab and the Hindoo Koosh, which are inhabited by a number of tribes mostly of Aryan origin"[4]. He was, however, honest in recording. "The name 'Dard' is not acknowledged by any section of the tribes to whom it has been so sweepingly applied. In a single instance[5] the term is applied by one tribe to some of their neighbours. Though the Dards are frequently

1. G.B. Leither : *Dardistan in 1866, 1886 and 1893*, Woking, 1894.
2. *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, Karachi Reprint. 1977, pp. 8-9.
3. *Ibid* , Chapter XIV, pp. 155-64.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

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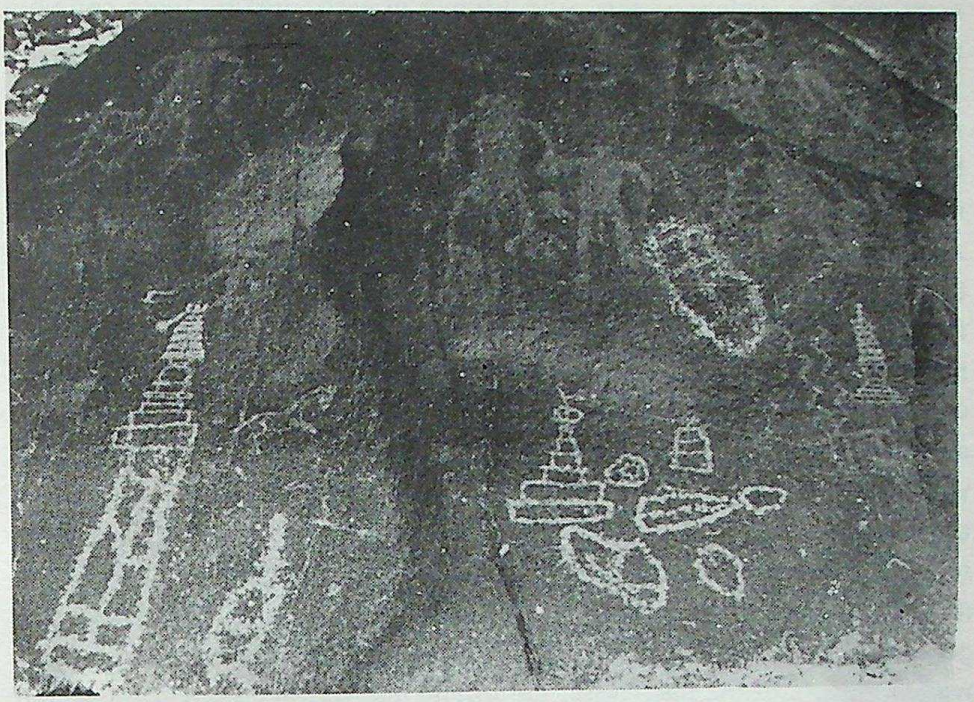
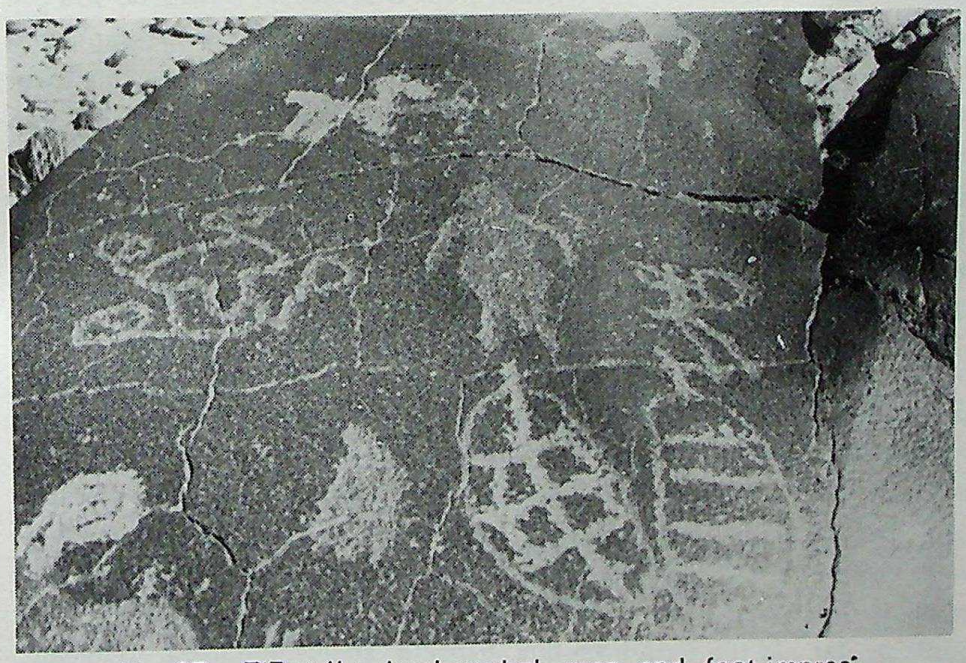


No. 26. Ziārat II : Men with children and serpents below later carvings.



No. 27. Ziārat II : ritual symbol, men and foot impressions below later carvings.

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mentioned by ancient writers, it is difficult now to identify with certainty the exact locality of the tribes referred to under that name. In the Vishṇu Purāṇa they are thus mentioned among other tribes, 'also Śūdras, Ābhiras, Daradas, Kaśmiras, with Paṭṭis, Khasiras, Antacharas, or borderes, Pahnaras and dwellers in monutain cave., Some of these names evidently refer to castes rather than to ethnological division. Arrian speaks of 'the Dardai, who inhabit the mountains on the eastern border,; but this would hardly apply to tribes inhabiting the present limits of Dardistan. Pliny's description, Fertilissimi sunt auri Dardoe., might apply to tribes dwelling in many parts of the Indus Valley, as far eastward as the Thok Jalung gold-fields in Long. 81° Ptolemy also speaks of the race, as living at the source of the Indus: 'Sub fontibus vero Indi Daradrae, et horum montana supereminent. Thus it is evident that the tribes referred to under the name of 'Dard' must formerly have stretched very much further to the eastward than those now so called. I think the name must have been given, in a general way, to all mountain tribes in the Indus Valley, by the less warlike people of the plains and the effeminate Cashmeris, and that the legend grew up concerning them, not an uncommon one in wild countries, that they were descended from wild beasts. 'why do you call me Dardoo, ? is the question most commonly asked by the Gilgitis who visit Cashmere. 'Because your grandfather was a bear, is not infrequent answer. Thus from the Persian دد *dud*, 'a beast of prey, or from درند *darenda*, fierce', the name Dard may have come to be used as an ethnological term in the same way as *dahyu* 'a robber' gave its name to Dahistan and the Dahoe tribe, as shown by General Cunningham, and as Kaffir, Cossack, and Kirghiz are now applied to different Asiatic tribes. The term Dard is not known in Chirtal."[6]

Whether one likes it or not, people of this area, thanks to the European writers, have become "Dards", and their country designated as "Dardistan". Actually the mistake originated in the Indian epic literature and Paurāṇic traditions, which, as quoted above by Biddulph, contemptuously applied the term "Daradas" to these people as they also used the term "Kirāṭa" for other non-conformist people of the eastern Himalayan region. The early classical writers of the west probably derived the term from this Sanskrit source and used "Dadicae" or "Derdai". While studying the Kashmiri Chronicle of Kalhaṇa, Sir

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-57.

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No. 28. Ziārat II : snake biting a man at the neck.

No. 29. Ziārat II : snake biting a man at the foot.

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Aurel Stein pertinently remarks : "The *Dāradas* are the modern *Dards* regarding whose territory and ethnography Drew, Jummoo,[7] pp. 393 sqq. may be consulted. Their seats, which do not seem to have changed since the time of Herodotus, extend from Chitral and Yasin, across the Indus regions of Gilgit, Cilas, and Bunji to the Kisanganga Valley in the immediate north of Kashmir. The tribes inhabiting the latter valley are meant in most of the passages in which the Chronicle mentions the Dāradas or Darads."[8] The last point, made by Stein, *i.e.* the tribes, referred to in the passages of this book inhabited the Kishanganga Valley, appears to be accurate and has a significant meaning in the context of Kashmir history. As this valley lies on the main route from the north into Kashmir Valley, this no doubt became the opening—the gateway—to Kashmir, and hence in the eyes of the Kashmiris it became a *dar*, (Sanskrit *dvāra*, meaning a door), just as in southern Afghanistan the route from west to the Indus region was known as *Zamīn-i-dāwar*[9] (meaning the Land of Entrance). It is not difficult to see the formation of "Darada" from this word just as we derive the word "Varada" from "Vara" (meaning "wish", and hence giver of wishes). For the Kashmiris all these people thus became "Darada" but the word has no racial or cultural significance. As far as the local people are concerned, the word has no appeal to them. It may, however, be mentioned that in a Kharoshṭhī inscription[10] the phrase *Daradaraya*, meaning "a Darada prince" has been read by Dr. Fussman, and he has also cited from the Buddhist works, *Mahāvastu* and *Lalitavistara*, the evidence for a *Darada lipi*, *i.e.* a Darada script.[11] As will be shown later, there is no separate Darada script. And we know nothing about the prince of this stock at this period. This word is also unknown to Muslim sources and also to Chinese travellers. Professor Jettmar[12] has also cited from the *kāśikā* commentary to Pāṇini, written about A D. 700, on *Daradī Sindhu*, *i.e.* "the Indus coming from the land of the Daradas." The use of such a phrase is understandable in Sanskrit tradition, as has been explained above.

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7. Drew Frederic, C : *The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories : A Geographic Account*, *London*, 1875.
8. M.A. Stein : *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī*, Delhi Reprint. 1979, p. 47, f.n.
9. G. Le Strange : *The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate*, Cambridge, 1930, pp. 345, 346.
10. G. Fussman : 'Inscriptions de Gilgit' in *BEFEO*, Tome LXV, Paris, 1978, p. 18.
11. See chapter V for the Darada script.
12. Prof. Karl Jettmar : 'Bolor—A Contribution to the Political and Ethnic Geogography of North Pakistan,' *Journal of Central Asia*, Vol. II, No. 1, Islamabad, July 1979, p. 47.

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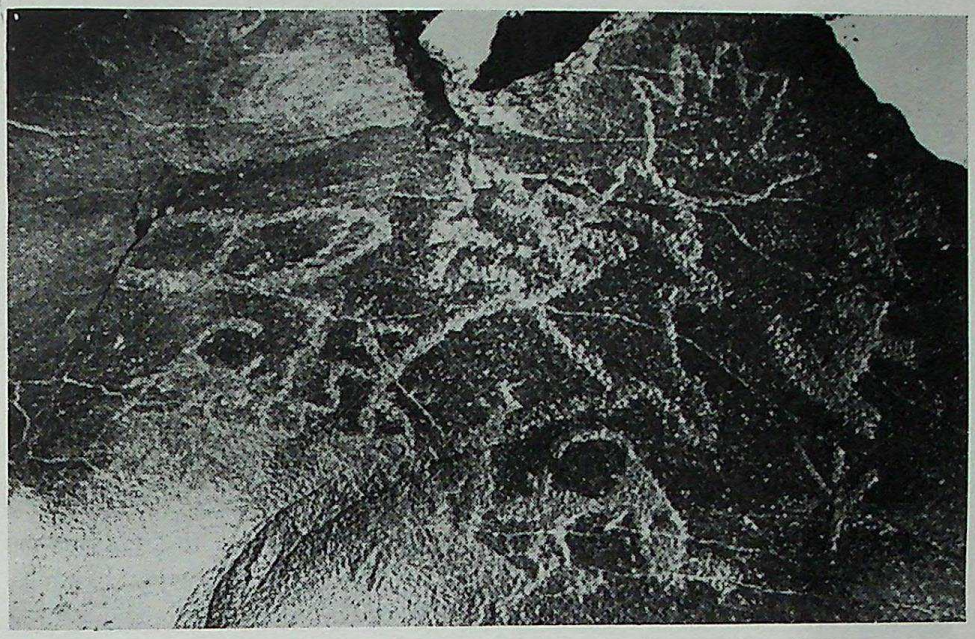

No. 30. Ziārat II : animals, palm and foot impressions.

No. 31. Ziārat II : human, bull and palm and foot impressions.

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The Chinese pilgrims, who were more interested in Buddhism, record different geographic terminology. Fa-Hian, who was the first to come in about A.D. 400, speaks of crossing Ts'ungling—the snowy mountain divide—and reaching the bordering country of To-li[13]. Sung-Yun, who came in A.D. 520, as an ambassador from the Ta (*i.e.* Great) Wei dynasty to the king of Ye-tha (*i.e.* Ephthalites or Huns), speaks of his extensive empire : "They receive tribute from all surrounding nations, on the south as far as Tieh-lo, on the north, the entire country of Lae-leh, eastward to Khotan, and west to Persia—more than forty countries in all.[14]"

It is because of this extensive power of the Huns that Sung-Yun makes wide reference to them. However, he names the country of Shie-Mi (Śāmbī ?), which "is just beyond the Ts'ungling mountains" and gives the detail of the aspect of the country from Po-lu-lai (identified with Bolor) to U-chang (Udyāna, modern Swat[15]). This information suggests that this traveller did not follow the same route as was done by Fa-Hian. There is an old Chinese inscription[16] of this time on the Sacred Rock of Hunza, speaking of an ambassador from Ta-Wei court. If this ambassador was Sung-Yun, the country of Shie-Mi may be identified with Hunza, to the south-west of which lay Po-lu-lai (Bolor, *i.e.* modern Gilgit region). The name of the country between Bolor and Udyāna has not been mentioned. But it is clear that the Huns were the overlords.

In the first half of the seventh century A.D. Hiuen Tsang came here from the opposite direction, *i.e.* from U-Chang-na (*i.e.* Udyāna, modern Swat). He followed the difficult road on the top of the mountain along the Indus river and reached "the river valley of Ta-li-lo, where stood once the capital of U-Chang-na. This country produces much gold and scented turmeric. By the side of a great saṅghārāma in this valley of Ta-li-lo is a figure of Maitreya Bodhisattva, carved out of wood. It is golden coloured, and very dazzling in appearance, and possesses a secret spiritual power (miracle). It is about 100 feet high and is the work of the Arhat Madhyāntika. This saint by his spiritual power caused a sculptor to ascend into the Tushita heaven (Tu-sito), that he might see for himself the marks and signs (on the person of Maitreya) ; this he did three times till his task was finished. From the time of the

13. S. Beal : *The Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Delhi Reprint, 1969, Introduction, p. xci.
14. *Ibid*, Introduction, p. xci.
15. *Ibid*, p. xciii.
16. A.H. Dani : *Karakorum Highway unfolds the Romance of the Past*, Islamabad, 1981.

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No. 32. Ziārat II : a ritual deity.

No. 33. Chilas IIIa : a sheep fighting with a snake.

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execution of this image the streams of law (religious teaching) began to flow eastward."[17]

As this same story is mentioned by Fa-Hian without naming the *Arhat* (*i.e.* the Reverent), his country of To-li is identified with Ta-li-lo of Hiuen Tsang. It is difficult to understand how the capital of U-Chang-na (*i.e.* Swat) could be located here unless, of course, the Huns set up a governor here for looking after the entire region. As has been argued in chapter I, the country of Ta-li-lo need not be confined to the river valley of Darel. The association of gold with this country makes it certain that the Chinese pilgrim is talking here of a country on the bank of the Indus where alone gold is washed by Soniwals even today. This is further confirmed by the onward journey of Hiuen Tsang, who says : "Going east from this, after climbing precipices and crossing valleys, we go up the course of the Sin-tu (Indus) river ; and then by the help of flying bridges and footways made of wood across the chasms and precipices, after going 500 li or so we arrive at the country of Po-lu-lo (Bolor)."[18] This explict description proves that the route must have followed across Chilas. But if one is in Darel valley, he can go straight to Gilgit across the hill and need not come to the Indus river. It is, however, possible that Hiuen Tsang refers to the mouth of the Darel river, where now stands Shatial bridge—a place wherefrom carvings and inscriptions begin in the Chilas area (see below) on the west. The presence of the Chinese in Chilas is proved by two old Chinese inscriptions (no. 39), one at Chilas I and another at Thalpan IV. Another old Chinese inscription has been found at Shatial. There are also two finely carved horses at Thalpan III, which resemble the T'ang (A.D. 618-907) type (Nos. 194 and 195).

Besides the Chinese sources, the Classical writers of the West also refer to this part of the world. Herodotus[19] is the first to give the hearsay report : "Besides these there are Indians of another tribe, who border the city of Caspatyrus, and the country of Pactyica ; these people dwell northward of all the rest of the Indians, and follow nearly the same mode of life as the Bactrians. They are more warlike than any of the other tribes, and from them the men are sent forth who go to procure the gold. For it is in this part of India that the sandy desert lies. Here,

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17. S. Beal, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 134.
18. *Ibid.* pp. 134-35.
19. *The History of Herodotus*, Book Three, Paragraphs, 102-105,

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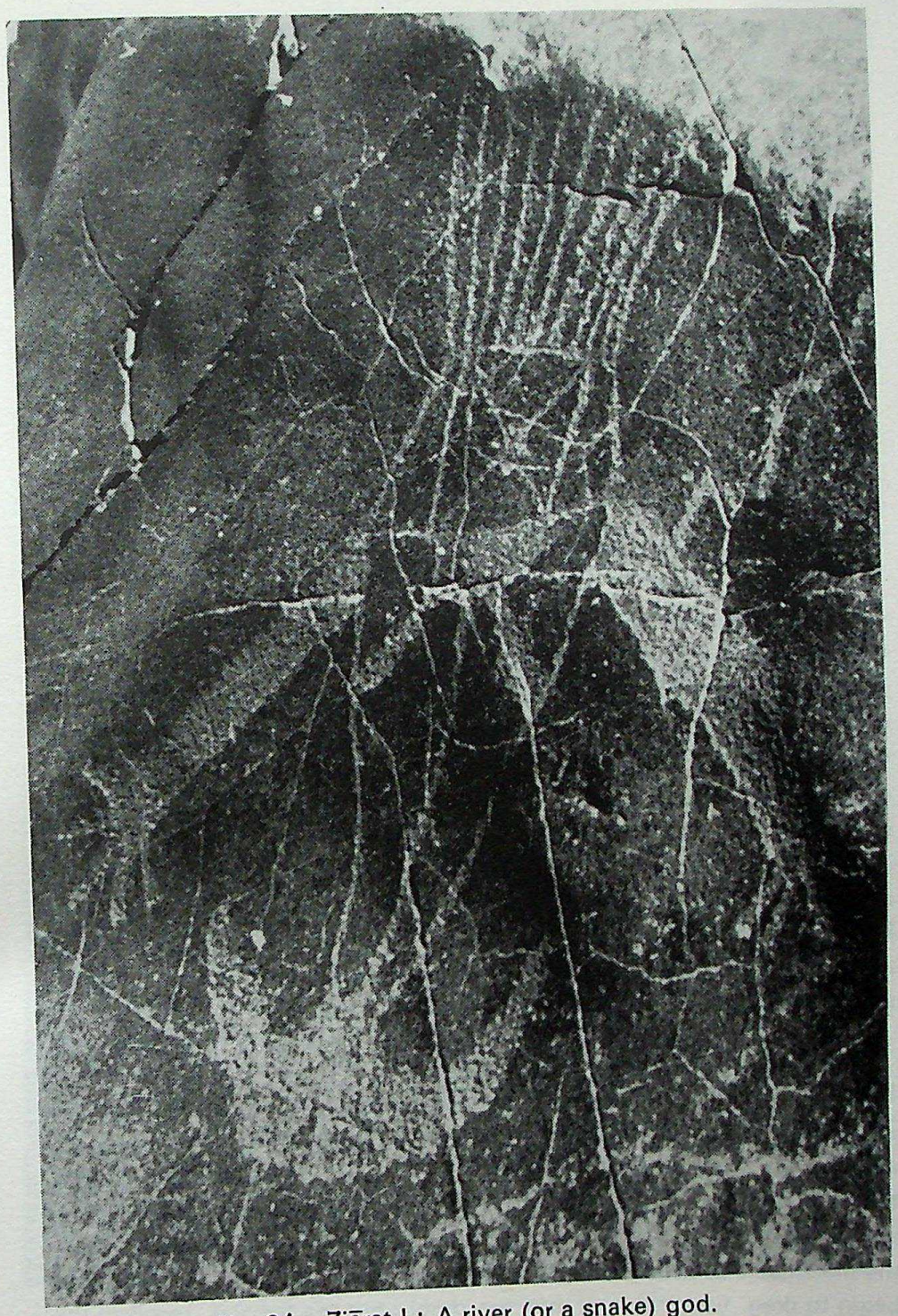

No. 34. Ziārat I : A river (or a snake) god.

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in this desert, live amid the sand great ants, in size samewhat less than dogs, but bigger than foxes. The Persian king has a number of them, which have been caught by the hunters in the land whereof we are speaking. Those ants make their dwellings under ground, and like the Greek ants, which they very much resemble in shape, throw up sand-heaps as they burrow. Now the sand which they throw up is full of gold. The Indians, when they go into the desert to collect this sand, take three camels and harness them together, a female in the middle and a male on either side, in a leading-rein. The rider sits on the female, and they are particular to choose for the purpose one that has but just dropped her young ; for their female camels can run as fast as horses, while they bear burthens very much better.

"As the Greeks are well acquainted with the shape of the camel, I shall not trouble to describe it ; but I shall mention what seems to have escaped their notice. The camel has in its hind legs four thigh-bones and four knee-joints.

"When the Indians therefore have thus equipped themselves they set off in quest of the gold, calculating the time so that they may be engaged in seizing it during the most sultry part of the day, when the ants hide themselves to escape the heat. The sun in those parts shines fiercest in the morning, not, as elsewhere, at noonday ; the greatest heat is from the time when he has reached a certain height, until the hour at which the market closes. During this space he burns much more furiously than at midday in Greece, so that the men there are said at that time to drench themselves with water. At noon his heat is much the same in India as in other countries, after which, as the day declines, the warmth is only equal to that of the morning sun elsewhere. Towards evening the coolness increases, till about sunset it becomes very cold.

"When the Indians reach the place where the gold is, they fill their bags with tne sand, and ride away at their best speed : the ants, however, scenting them, as the Persians say, rush forth in pursuit. Now these animals are, they declare, so swift, that there is nothing in the world like them : if it were not, therefore that the Indians get a start while the ants are mustering, not a single gold-gatherer could escape. During the flight the male camels, which are not so fleet as the females, grow tired, and begin to drag, first one, and then the other ; but the females recollect the young which they have left behind, and never give way or flag. Such, according to the Persians, is the manner in which the Indians get the

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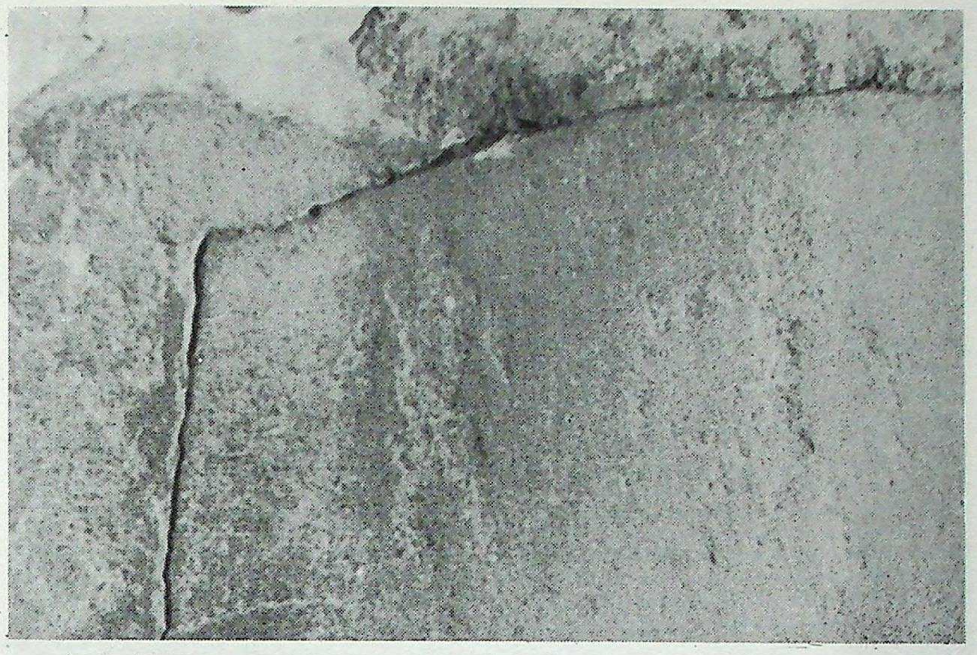

No. 35. Chilas IV : Two humans and a fence.

No. 36. Chilas IV : Reed fence (?)

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greater part of their gold ; some dug out of the earth, but of this the supply is scanty."

Herodotus does not name the tribe but other authors repeat the same story. Strabo records : "Nearchus says that the skins of the gold-mining ants are like those of leopards. But Megasthenes speaks of these ants as follows : that among the *Derdae*, a large tribe of the Indians living towards the east and in the mountains, there is a plateau approximately three thousand stadia in circuit, and that below it are gold mines, of which the miners are ants, animals that are no smaller than foxes."[20]

Such gold washers are even now found in Chilas area. They are known as Soniwals and they wash gold out of the Indus sand during summer when snow melts and Indus gets flood water bringing with it gold dust from upstream. This classical source by the way speaks of the relations of the Achaemenian Persians with this area. It is possible that this area was within that empire but for this we have no direct information.

The ant-gold has been referred to in the *Mahābhārata*. Dr. U. N. Ghoshal writes : "The ant-gold said in a *Mahābhārata* passage (ii.52.2-4) to have been presented by the Khaśas and other tribes (living by the Śailodā river between the mountains Meru and Mandara) is no doubt identical with that which, according to the equally absurd story of Megasthenes, was obtained by the Derdai (Daradas). Following Tarn's plausible interpretation of the parallel passage from Megasthenes we may suppose that the ant-gold of the epic was likewise nothing but Siberian gold of which the source was concealed by the middlemen engaged in trade."[21] The conclusion of Dr. Ghoshal is not correct because it is actually washed even today by the Soniwals in Chilas area. However, the other information of associating the Khaśa tribe with ant-gold is very interesting as that would help in locating this tribe at such an early period with this region where alone gold is washed in the Indus sand. Later the tribe became predominant elsewhere. After studying Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, Stein concludes : "It can be shown from a careful examination of all the passages that their (Khaśas) seats here restricted to a comparatively limited region, which may be roughly described as comprising the valleys lying immediately to the south and west of Pir Pantsal

20. R.C. Majumdar : *The Classical Accounts of India*, Calcutta 1960, p. 226.
21. K.A. Nilakantha Sastri (ed. by), *A Comprehensive History of India, The Mauryas and Satavahans*, Madras, 1957, p. 434.

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No. 37. Chilas IV : husband and wife (?)

No. 38. Chilas IV : man and woman.

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range, between the middle course of Vitasta in the west and Kāṣṭavāṭa (Kishtawar) in the east."[22]

The Khaśas are known as early as the time of the Mauryan rule. In the Buddhist work *Divyāvadāna* the Mauryan prince Aśoka, after subduing the revolt at Taxila during the reign of his father Bind-usāra is represented as entering the Svaśa (Khaśa) *rājya* (the Khaśa Kingdom)[23]. According to the Sanskrit drama, *Mudrārākshasa*, Chandragupta's recruits included the allied army of Malayaketu comprising men from Khaśa, Magadha, Gandhāra etc.[24] which enabled him to lay the foundation of the Mauryan empire. If the evidence from *Mahābhārata* about the association of the Khaśas with ant-gold is correct, they should be located at this time in Chilas area. Fortunately this is confirmed by the following inscription found at Shatial (no. 40) :

*Jīvavarma Jaja Īśvaravarma Dhorika*

*Reukavarmapeḍako Khaśarāja Gaṇa*

*Vishṇumajña Niḍaka Yaśanandivarma Dhorika*

*Revatibhrata Khaṇḍavarma Vaṭuko*

All these names of the *Khaśarājagana* are very informative. At Chilas IX one name is twice repeated as Śrī Jīvavarma and Jīvavarma Jaja. Unfortunately the remaining part of the second inscription is not readable. At Chilas VIII we get another name VĪRAVARMA JAJA. The inscriptions belong to fifth century A.D. The use of the phrase *Khaśarājagaṇa*, i.e. a tribe of Khaśa kings, suggests that the names enumerated here are of the leading people of the Khaśa tribe. From the findspot of the inscriptions it appears that the tribe was wide-spread in the Chilas area. The names of the persons have terminal additions of *Jaja, Dhorika, Peḍaka, Niḍaka* and *Vaṭuka*. It seems that these must be taken as surnames, Whether these persons were actually rulers one after the other or they were leading persons of the Khaśa tribe, is difficult to say. But in the absence of any other royal title, they may be better taken as the leaders of the Khaśa tribe, which appears to have settled here at least from the time of the Mauryas to fifth century A.D. Later we will note that in this period no other king is known here probably because the government was of tribal nature.

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22. M.A. Stein, *Op. Cit.*, p. 47, footnote.
23. H.C. Raychaudhuri : *Political History of Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1953, p. 298.
24. K.A. Nilakantha Sastri, *Op. Cit.*, p. 4,

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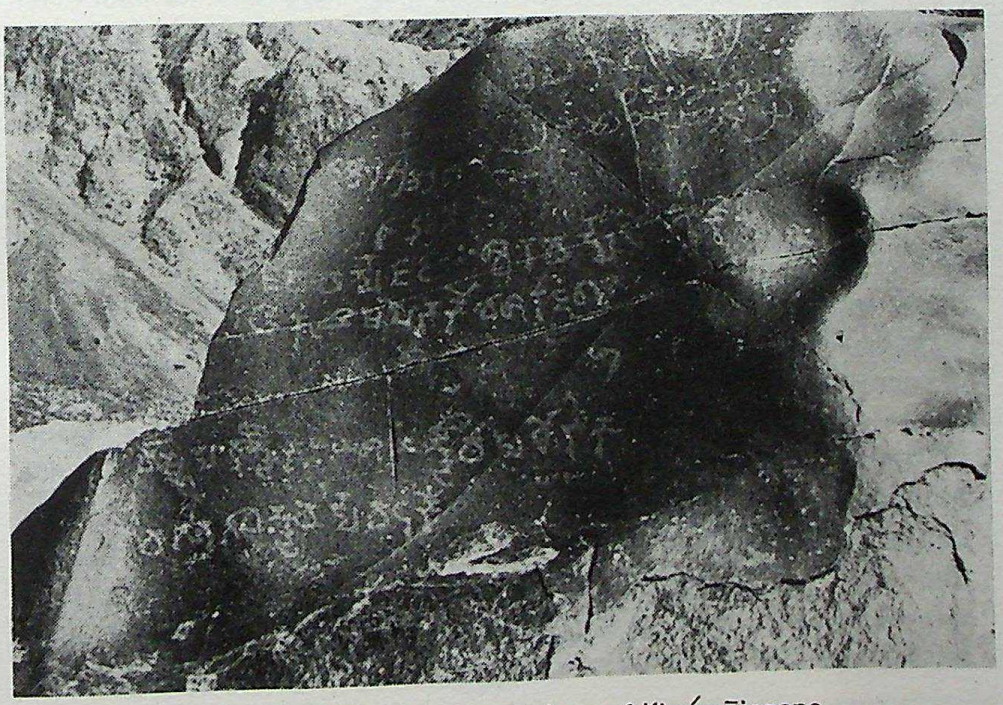
No. 39. Chilas I : name of a person written in old Chinese.



No. 40. Shatial : inscriptions of Khaśarājagaṇa.

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Sir Aurel Stein[25] found two inscriptions of a ruler at Pakhtorīdinī and at Mastuj in Chitral, inscribed either below the stūpa or on either side of the stūpa. In the first the name is read as *Jivarmaṇaḥ* and in the second *Raja Jivarmaḥ* and he likes to derive them from the Sanskrit form JAYAVARMAN. But if the inscription from Shatial can guide us, the correct name should be *Jīvavarman*. The inscriptions are dated to fifth century A.D. Is it possible to identify this Chitral ruler with Jīvavarma Jaja ? Although the time of the two is almost the same, yet they do not appear to be the same ruler as the Chilas king had an additional name of Jaja and belonged to Khaśa tribe. How long this Khaśa tribe survived in this region is difficult to say but as we will see below, new people and new kings appear to have dominated this area from time to time. However, the presence of the Yaśkun tribe as a land-owning class in this region is very instructive. If this tribal name could in any way be connected with Khaśa, its history could be easily reconstructed.

Before we proceeed to the succeeding periods of history, we have some evidence for earlier periods. The first evidence comes from Darel valley, where old *koṭs* (fortified towns) have been noted at Gayal, Phuguch, Ghomari and Manikyal. The Italian Archaeological Mission, now working in Swat, discovered some big storage jars when they visited this valley. At several places grave sties were reported. Only at the site of Manikyal Payin, just by the side of the old city, on a hillock a probing was done. It was a cemetery area, where local people had earlier dug and removed some big jars for their daily use. One such grave, on examination, showed the burial of a big globular urn containing burnt bones and ashes and covered by a flat stone lid. It was an example of cremated burial in an urn which was finally buried inside an artificially excavated pit—a type of burial already known from Gandhāra region of Swat, Dir, Bajaur and Peshawar valley.[26] This type of urn has not been found in Gandhāra. The globular urn has a thick flat-topped wide rim, stamped with impressions of star and other motifs. Its base is disc-based but very small. A complete example (no. 5) of this type was recovered from a house. In the same burial pit some other smaller pots (no. 41) were also found. One of them was a broken stem

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25. *Serindia*, Vol. I, pp. 37-41.
26. *Ancient Pakistan*, Vol. III, Peshawar, 1967-68.

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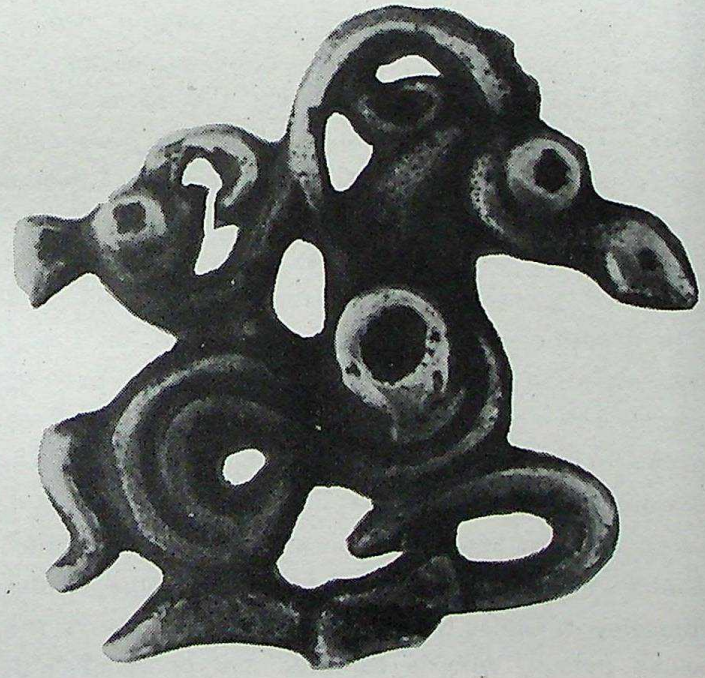
No. 41. Darel Valley : decorated burial pot.



No. 42. Kandia Valley : stylistic bronze figure of an ibex.

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of a bowl-on-stand—a type known from the grave pottery in Gandhāra Grave Culture. All the pots are of red ware. Although ritually these graves show an affinity with Gandhāra graves yet it is difficult to assign an exact date unless proper excavation is conducted here. In any case these graves do speak of penetration of a people at least in the first millennium B. C. Similar potsherds were also recovered from Gichi (Chilas VII) and, as stated in chapter I, such grave pots have also been reported from the neighbourhood of Jayachand hill in Chilas proper. Professor Karl Jettmar has also recovered some bronze objects from Kandia valley (No. 42) and from Astor. These are all surface collections probably recovered from old graves. Their exact nature remains to be determined in future.

Our next evidence comes in the first century B. C. when large number of Kharoshṭhī inscriptions from different sites throw light on the condition of established life in this part. A small slab at the site of Minargāh (no, 43), 30 km. from Chilas, lying just by the roadside, shows a Kharoshṭhī writing of this period, clearly distinguishable by the form of the letter *'Sa'* and gives the reading *Magulaputrasa*, i.e. "Of the son of Magula". Magulaputra appears to be the name of an individual. At Chilas II (see chapter IV) such *putra* ending names are also found. There we have two names *Gopadasa Akshaputra* and *Gopadasa Balaputra*. We have also got separately the name of *Gopadasa* in the same rock. These examples suggest that the *putra* ending words were probably petronyms, or rather metronyms, if Gopadasa was the actual father. Near the slab, where the name Magulaputra occurs, there is a carving of three animals (no. 44) on a rock facing west. Two of them are ibexes of local type. But the third shows all the peculiarities of a Scythian prancing horse but it has curved horns on the head, suggesting that intention was to draw an ibex but it has been modelled on the Scythian style of a horse. In any case it does fix the date of the drawing to the first century B.C. There is another inscription ( rock ) of two lines from Thor site. The first line is not very clear as part of it is chipped away. But the second line clearly gives the name of *Gopadasasa*, i.e. "Of Gopadasa". There is no doubt that this name is identical with the one appearing at Chilas II. At the latter site this is the name of the fat-bellied person, who is captured and is being dragged by the soldiers in Scythian dress and brought to the high person seated on a high backed chair. His name is given as *Moga Raja*. There should be no difficulty in identifying this person with the Scythian ruler Maues,

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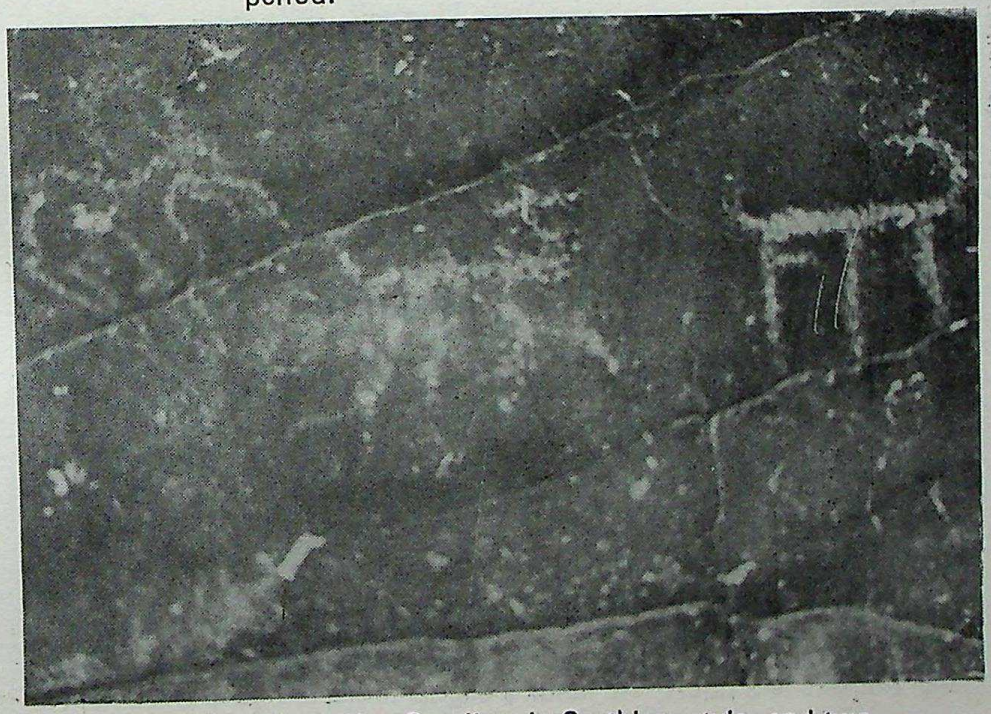
No. 43. Minargāh : Kharoshṭhī inscription of Scythian period.



No. 44. Minargāh : One ibex in Scythian style and two in local type.

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whose name occurs in the Taxila copperplate of Patika[27] in the same form as Moga. The appearance of this ruler's name, the drawing of an ibex in the style of a Scythian horse, and the portrayal of several Scythian horsemen at Chilas II, clearly prove the conquest of this region by the Scythians and their occupation of the land from the earlier ruler Gopadasa and his two sons. It appears that these Scythians migrated from across the Pamir by northerly passes by a direct route, However, they established connection with Gandhāra as the stūpa types that were erected during their period all conform to the type of Gandhāra examples.

The name of Moga (nos. 78 and 85) also occurs in two more long inscriptions at Chilas II in which the names of his two *Kshatrapas* (governors) are given. One is called Ghoshamitra, son of Kaka, and the second is named Sidhalaka. In the second inscription Moga bears the title of *Mahataka* (great). There is a second *Mahata* (great), named as *Lavika*, at this place. It is difficult to identify this person. At the same rock there is a date of 100, when something was established. It is difficult to ascertain the person whom this date implies.

How did the Scythian rule come to an end, is not known. The large number of inscriptions and stūpas engraved at Chilas II suggest that they must have continued for quite some time. The next historical stage is seen in the time of the Parthians. One Kharoshṭhī inscription (No. 46) on the Gondophares Rock at Chilas reads :

VITASPA PRIYATI GENDAVHARASA RAJA

The first word may be *Vistaspa* a well—known Iranian deity. There should be no difficulty in identifying the king with the Parthian ruler Gondophares. The other Kharoshṭhī carvings of this period are found at the Altar Rock in Thalpan II. A dim inscription on that site reads : *Vicharati Dhamikasa* The first word means "moves" or "spreads," and the second word is in the genetive case, which is obviously wrong. The main word means "A religious" or "A devout" one. It may have a reference to some king who had this title. The other face of this rock has a long panel. On the right (no. 47) is a Parthian soldier in typical Parthian dress having a Phrygian cap on the head, a tight-fitting long coat covering the upper part of the body, trousers and boots. He holds a dagger in his left hand and a hunted goat in his right. Above him are drawings of some ibexes but on the

27. Sten Konow : *C I I.*, Vol. II, *Kharoshthi Inscriptions*, Calcutta, p. 28.

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No. 45. Chillas III : horseman's banner.

No. 46. Gondophares Rock : Kharoshṭhī inscription of Gondophares.

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top left are drawn three animals in a row. The front one, which is drawn in outline, is an unfinished lion with a long tail and tuft of hair on the head. The two hind animals have part of their body filled with pecked marks, have horns overhead, the front legs are advanced and the tail, in one case, is curled up and, in the other example, hangs behind as a bushy tail. As we proceed to the left, we have a confused group (no. 48) of humans, animals and stūpas of different periods. On the top right is a human carrying a plough on his shoulder. To his front one of the animals is in the same style, as the two described above, but in this case the long twisted horns upward suggest that it is intended for a markhor. There are other late drawings of ibexes. One terraced stūpa is on the right and on the left we have a temple on a triple terrace. At the bottom are two humans talking to each other. Both of them are in long coat of Parthian style and have their left hands at the waist and their right hands raised up. Still further to the left (no. 48) are two Parthian soldiers. One is holding a lance in hand and another appears to be receding back. Besides dog, ibex and other animals, at the bottom, there is a second temple with triangular spire and *triśūla*-topped finial of a late period. On the top surface of this rock some other scenes of this period can be seen. On the left (no. 49) is a spoked wheel by the side of a snake having two hands, one at either end. To the right top are two animals ; one is a poorly drawn markhor and another is probably a stylistic horse drawn in the Parthian style. Still below are two poorly drawn animals, copying the same style with a man, holding a banner, seated on the hind animal. The animals have their legs bent. On another surface (no. 50) can be seen several animals and a fighting scene between serpents and lion. One horned animal in the middle is remarkable in its detailed drawing showing the bent leg in the Achaemenian style. The fighting scene shows two snakes facing each other and lions, in outline, jumping at them. The front lion shows two horns. The same style is seen on a nearby rock. In one example (no. 51) two stags are drawn, one behind the other and in another example (no. 52) a lion is pouncing upon another animal drawn in simple line. On the whole the Parthian period appears to have exerted a prolonged influence on the art of this region

The end of the Parthian rule in this part is not well evidenced. However, the Kushāṇas appear to have advanced into this part very early in their reign. A Kharoshṭhī inscription (no. 53) from Chilas X, just facing the Karakorum Highway, gives a clear reading : *Uvimadasakasa.*

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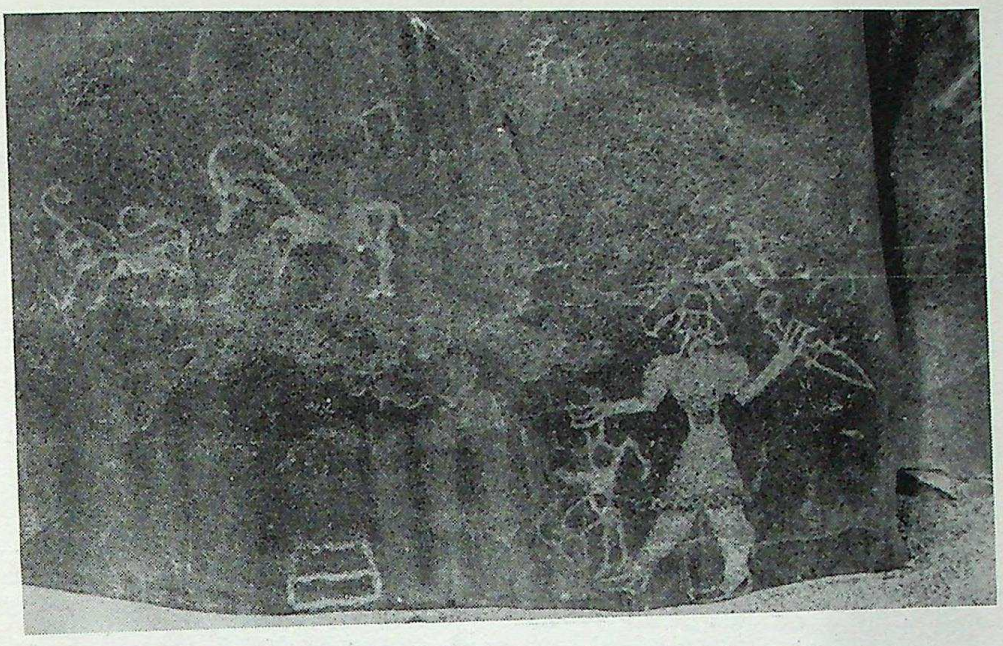

No. 47. Thalpan II : Parthian soldier with his hunt.

No. 48. Thalpan II : Two Parthian soldiers and other figures.

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Although no royal title is attached to this name, yet it will not be wrong to see in it an attempt to write the Kushāṇa name Vimakadaphasa, which is spelt as Uvima Kavṭhisasa in the Khalatse inscription[28]. As the Kharoshṭhī style is of the Kushāṇa period, chronologically there is no difficulty. If this is accepted, the Kushāṇa rule could be traced from this period onward. However, it must be noted that the Kushāṇa emperor's name in the Chilas area is rare, although their names occur at the Sacred Rock of Hunza. At Chilas II (see chaptar IV) there is an important inscription (no. 89) giving the full royal titles of Vasishka or Vajheshka. As the name has been read, Kaeshkasa or Jhashkasa has the titles of Kaisarasa, Rajatirajasa, Devadevasa. These three titles are very significant as they also occur in the Ara inscription of Kanishka II,[29] his son. The appearance of his name in Chilas and the non-appearance of other Kushāṇa ruler's names seem to be significant. They may highlight the differences among the Kushāṇas in the time of Huvishka. The other significant point is that we do not find here any Buddhist carving in the style of early Gandhāra sculptures although Buddhists continued to work here, as attested by the following Kharoshṭhī inscriptions from this region :

(i) At Chilas VI the inscription, which occurs on a rock very close to the one having the figure of the giant man, reads :

*Vehavaranasa Thubu Prataṭha(ka)*

"The stūpa was established by Vehavarana.

(ii) At Chilas V just by the roadside the inscription reads :

*Veghahasa Onakasa*

"Of Veghaha Onaka". The remaining portion of the inscription is not clear.

(iii) At Chilas IV there is a footprint (of the Buddha) carved on a boulder. Above it the inscription reads :

*Saṃgha Padasa Shamaṇasa Vegahasa Ashagreasa*

"The footprint (in the) monastery (made by the) monk Vegaha Ashagrea". Here all the words have genetive case which is actually wrong. Such mistakes are common here. The monk may be belonging to the same tribe as in no. (ii) above.

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28. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

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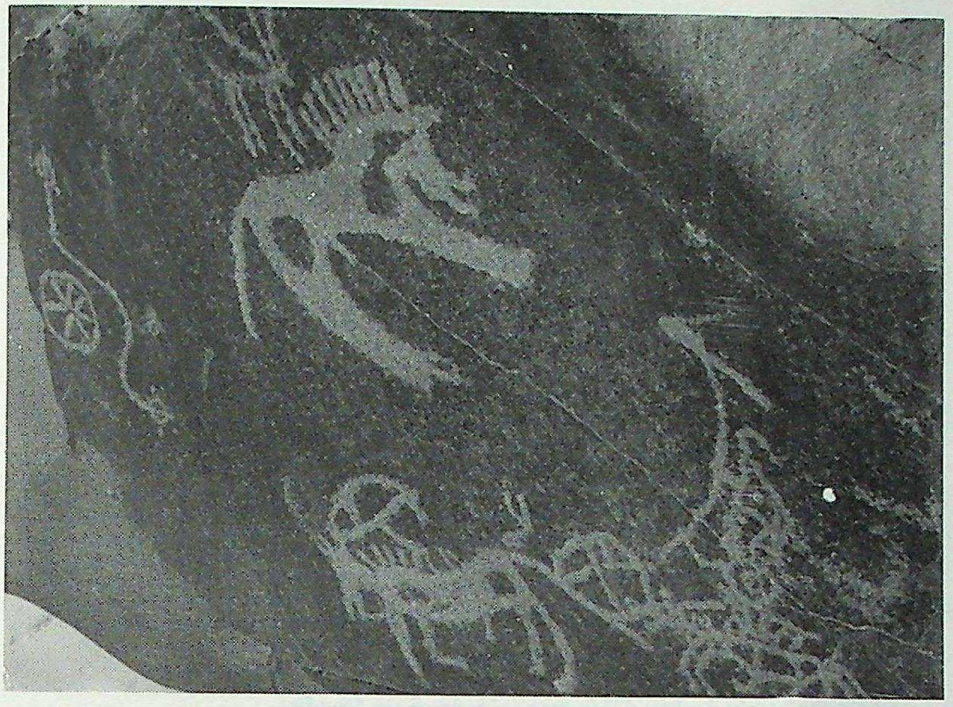

No. 49. Thalpan II : wheel, double headed snake and Parthian animals.

No. 50. Thalpan II : Parthian animal and lions fighting with snakes.

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(iv) On the other side of the river just before the Ziārat site a boulder has just the name : DASASA, i.e. "Of Dāsa".

(v) Another inscription of this period is found at Khomar site giving the name of DHAIKA, and a second inscription reads MIŚOKASA.

Several other Kharoshṭhī inscriptions remain to be studied.

The end of the Kushāṇa rule is also not properly evidenced. However, there is one Aramaic inscription found at Chilas IX, two Sogdian inscriptions, one at Ziārat II and another at Khomar site, and large number of Sogdian inscriptions alongwith some Kharoshṭhī inscriptions of still later date at Shatial. Some of these inscriptions may fill the gap but they remain to be properly studied. There are five Kharoshṭhī inscriptions at Shatial two of which are at the left bottom of the main stūpa (no. 54) and three on other boulders. These inscriptions show features of the manuscript style of fifth century A.D. The main inscription at the stūpa reads :

*Dhamabai Jikhodarkha Dhle ra(na)Thubu Bato Dhaḍiti*

It may be translated thus :

"The religiously devoted daughter of Jikhodarkha established this best of stūpa".

The second inscription below reads :

*Sasa(ka) Priyaśa Chachusa Danamukhe*

"The gift of Chakshu, beloved of Sasa or Śaka".

Three other inscriptions give only names :

*Śivajakhamasa, Dajaputra Rushuja and Kadhapaasa*

All these appear to be Central Asian names probably derived from Saka origin. But there are other names in Brāhmī of the fifth century A.D. They are engraved in between the steps of the stūpa and other places wherever space was available. From the point of view of palaeography these names are very important as they fix the date before which the main stūpa must have been engraved. Some of these names are *Iṇṇaḍila, Bhaḍila, Śarmaṇa, Durmala, Aṭabhimaśamasya, Śrī Śataka* etc. The name of Bhaḍila occurs in two other inscriptions, one at Thor and another at Khomar. This name shows invariably triangular headmark in the shape of the letters—a palaeographic feature

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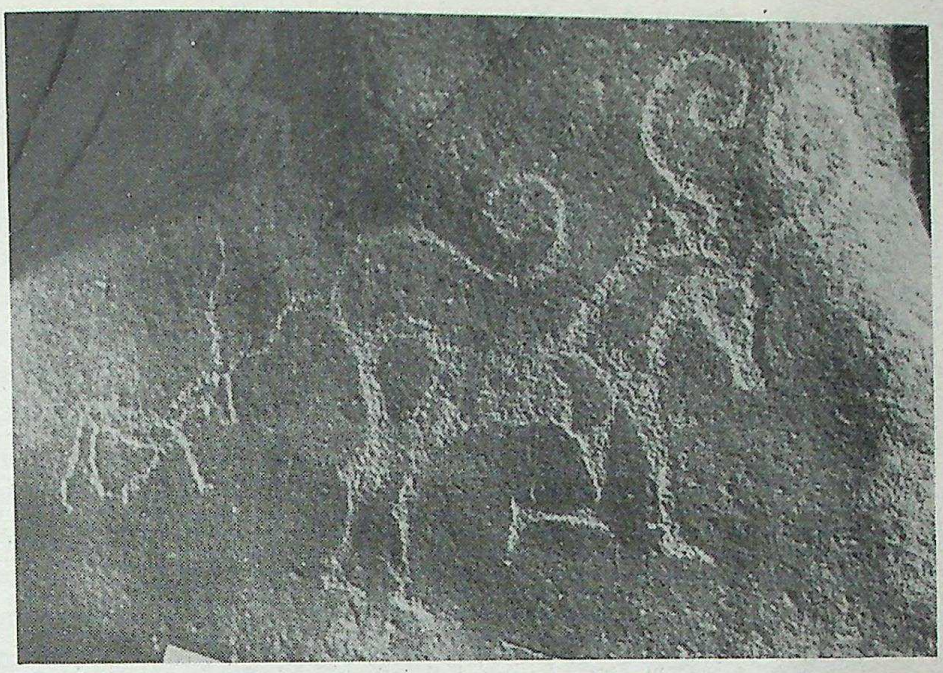
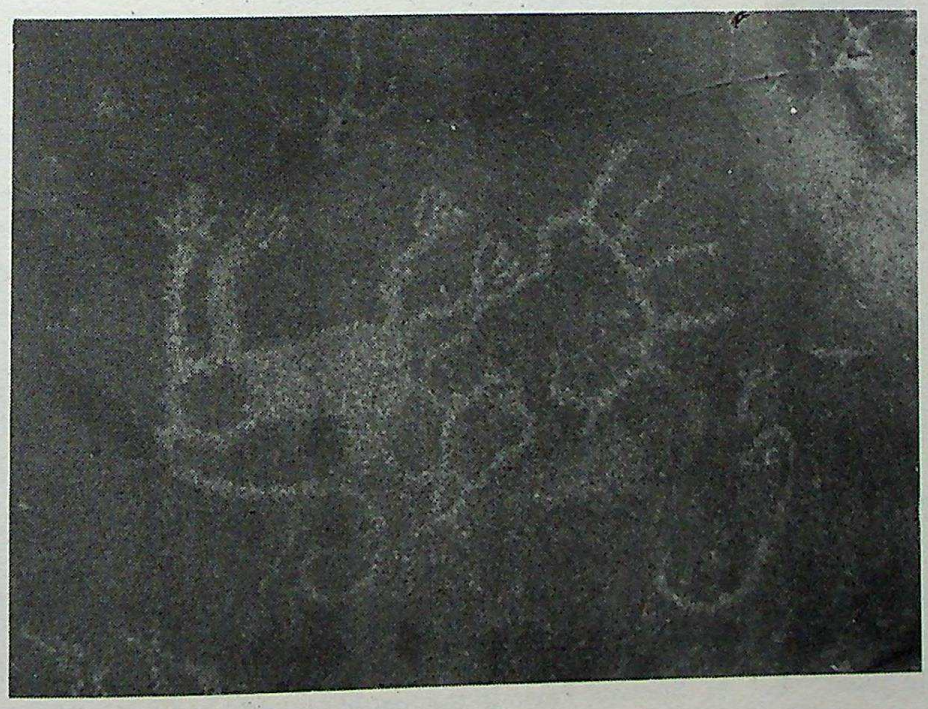


No. 51. Thalpan II : two stags.



No. 52. Thalpan II : lion pouncing upon an animal.

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of the fifth century A.D. Hereafter we do not find any Kharoshṭhī writing used in this region. Brāhmī remains the main script till the end although its form changes in course of time. It is strange that Śāradā script is not adopted here. In the fifth and early sixth centuries A.D. we do not get, as has been mentioned earlier, names of other rulers except the *Khaśarājagaṇa*. But we get several names of the individuals engraved on boulders here, which show the continuity of life here. In the same script of the fifth century A.D. we get the name of the city *Vīra Somonagara* at Thalpan bridge (no. 1) or simply *Somanagara* at Soniwal Payin in the neighbourhood of Chilas. At Chilas IX just by the roadside we get the names of *Gajarājputra, Datta Śrīrāma,* and *Māḍashvara.* In the same boulder we get the names in the Brāhmī script of early sixth century A.D. : *Chandrapāla, Śrīdāsa, Dharmapāla Śūra, Jinaspāla, Makhārjuṇa, Mitharjuṇa, Śrī Kumārasena, Tharaṅgasena, Madhusena,* and names like *Jayadāsa, Prajāpati and Nārika.* There are several other names on the hillside of the rock at Chilas IX, where an Aramaic inscription, referred to earlier, is also engraved. But we get hardly any information on the state of political authority at this time unless some of the names mentioned here are tribal chiefs.

However, we begin to get some names with royal titles from 6th century A.D. onward. On a boulder at Chilas IIa, not far from the municipal checkpost, we have an inscription, over which later carvings of animals and horsemen have disturbed the writing. The only definite reading is : *Namo Śailendrarajāya,* i.e. "salutation to the king Śailendra". It is difficult to identify this king. On the other side of the Indus river at Khomar site on a boulder (no. 55) we have a temple and several names in the writing of the fifth century A.D., including the names of *Kulajaya, Bhaḍila, Ādi Somoviprah* and *Śrī Sudamachandrarājā,* The last ruler is again unidentifiable. On another a temple is engraved with inscriptions on the left and on the right. Those on the right (no. 55) read :

*Śrī Indrabhaṭṭārakasya Śatrudamana(sya)*

"Of Śrī Indrabhaṭṭāraka, the destroyer of enemy".

A second inscription reads : NAMA DHARMAMITRA, i.e. "salutation to Dharmamitra". A third inscription reads : OṂ VĪRADATASYA THORANASYA, i.e. "Oṃ. Of Vīradata Thorana". Here no royal name is given. But at Soniwal Payin in the neighbourhood of Chilas we have

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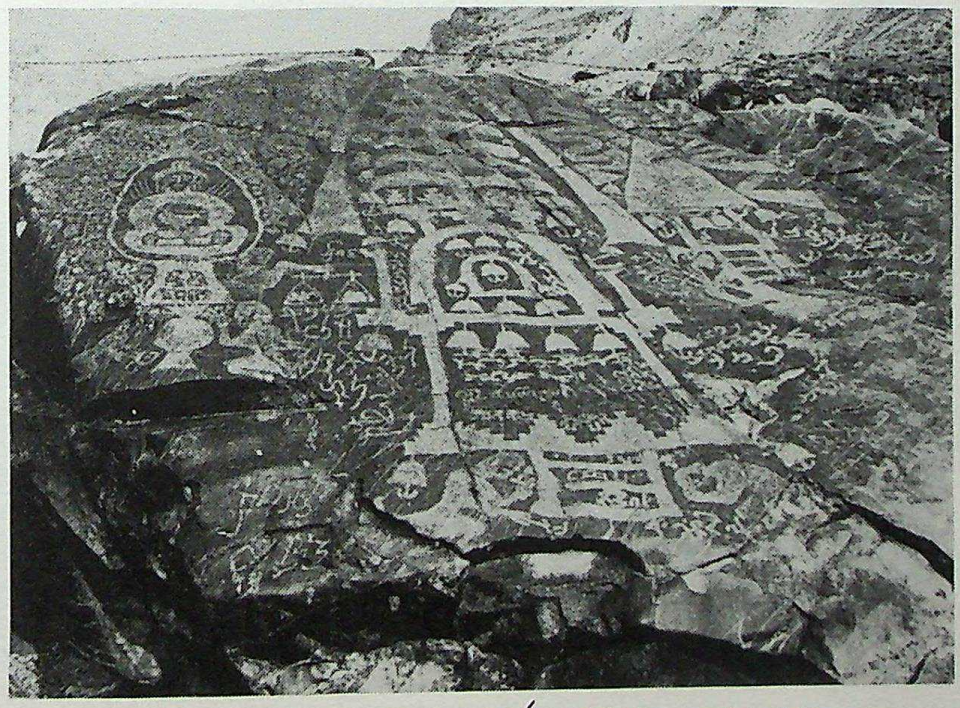
No. 53. Chilas X : Inscription of Uvimadasakasa.



No. 54. Shatial : Stūpa with Śibi Jātaka on the left and several inscriptions.

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two standing boulders marking the site of an old city where pottery has been washed away into the fields. There are several inscriptions on both these rocks in Brāhmī of 5th and 6th centuries A.D. The earliest inscriptions are at the bottom of the left boulder (no. 56), written in big letters, some of which have triangular headmarks. On the left and right the name of the city is given as Vīra Somanagara and simply Somanagara respectively. Above this on the right is SOMASYA, i e. "Of Soma". These are early writings. But the main inscription begins from the top (no. 57). The first two lines are in the most beautiful hand having a calligraphic flavour, the like of which is seen in the copperplates of Harshavardhana, the ruler of Kanauja. The first two lines read :

*Śakra Bhaṭṭāraka Śrī Diran Mahārāja Vaiśravaṇaseno Śatrudamano Jayati Śrī Rājā.*

"Śakra (i. e. Indra) bhaṭṭāraka Śrī the great king of the earth, Vaiśravaṇasena, the destroyer of the enemies, the glorious king conquers".

The next two lines in small hand on the right reads :

*Likhitaṃ Mayā Rājādhirāja Vaiśravaṇasenaḥ.*

"Written by me, king of kings, Vaiśravaṇasena".

This clearly proves that the calligraphic inscription was written by the king himself . The next two lines read :

*Śrī Diran Mahārājādhirāja Vaiśravaṇasenopādhyāya Rudraśrī Śilavaṭa Vishaya Pratishṭhitaḥ.*

"The glorious, the great king of kings of earth, Vaiśravaṇasena establisned the teacher Rudraśrī in Śilavaṭavishaya (i.e. district)." The next line appears to be a repetition of the king's name. The following line reads :

*Rājāmātya Naradevasena* i.e. "King's minister Naradevasena".

Two more lines read :

*Mahāsenāpati Viśpāmitra*, i.e. "Viśpāmitra, the commander-in-chief of the army".

The neighbouring boulder on the right is very important as it contains the genealogy of the ruler but unfortunately the weathering has made it

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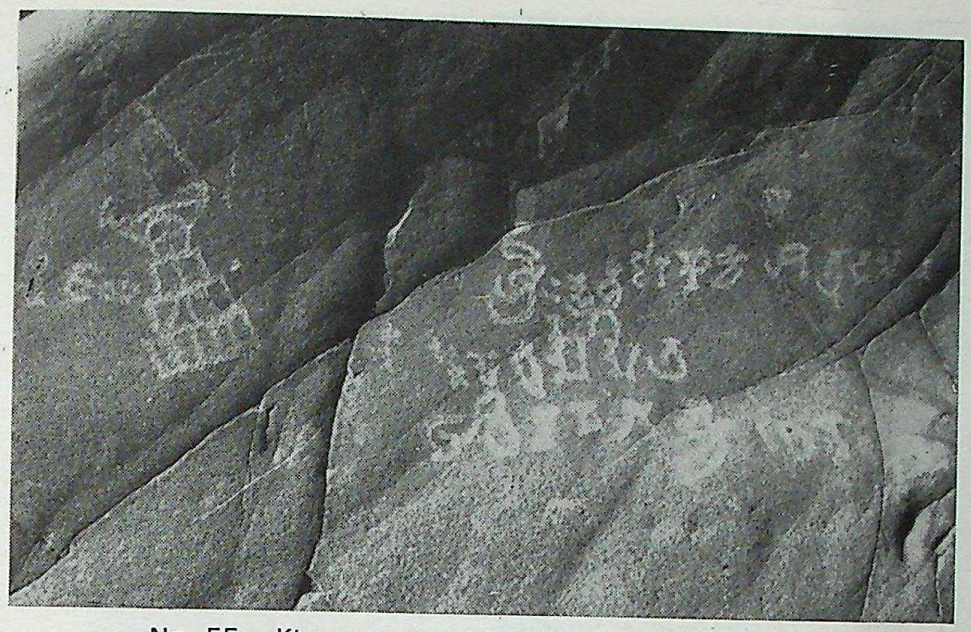

No. 55. Khomar : temple and late Brāhmī inscriptions.

No. 56. Soniwal Payin : Lower portion of the left inscription.

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difficult to read. However, the following names have been made out :

*Śrī Harisheṇo*

*Śrī Khaḍgavīryasenasya Prapautra*

*Yuvaśrīsenasya Putra*

*Vaiśravaṇasena Rājā*

*Sambhogasena*

By collating the two inscriptions we get the following information :

(1) Harisheṇa

(2) Khaḍgavīryasena

(3) Yuvaśrīsena

(4) Śakra-bhaṭṭāraka, mahārājādhirāja, Śatrudamana Vaiśravaṇasena ; his minister Śrī Naradevasena, commander-in-chief of the army Viśpāmitra, and teacher Rudraśrī.

(4) Sambhogasena

The name of the district is given as Śilavaṭa, which name must be identified with Chilas. Whether the king of kings Vaiśravaṇasena is identical with *Indrabhāṭṭaraka Śatrudamana*, as recorded at Khomar, is difficult to say. But he appears to have been an important ruler as his name occurs in other places as well.

How did this dynasty come to power is difficult to say. However, it has been said above that the Huns were the rulers of this region at the time of the visit of Sung-yun. At that time we get only the names of the tribal chiefs. This king may have asserted himself after the fall of the Hun empire towards the later half of the sixth century A.D. What happened to this dynasty is not known. But in the seventh century A.D. we get the name of Mahārāja Siṃhadeva, who has caused to be engraved several stūpas and other figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, as will be seen in chapter V. He also built a temple (no. 58), consisting of a sanctum on a double plinth and covered by a triangular shaped *śikhara* (spiro) with banners hanging to one side. Underneath this temple is an inscription in Brāhmī of early seventh century A.D. reading :

*Oṃ Devadharmoyaṃ Siṃhade (va) sya*

"Oṃ. The religious gift of Siṃhade (va)".

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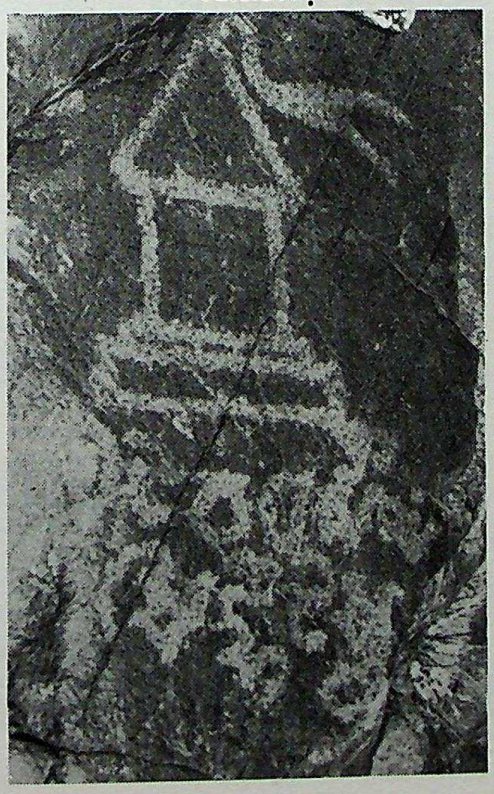
No. 57. Soniwal Payin : Upper portion of the left inscription giving the name of Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Vaiśravaṇasena.



No. 58. Chilas I : temple and inscription of Siṃhadeva.

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His name occurs in several other inscriptions of Chilas V and Chilas VIII. Nothing more is known about his rule. In the same century we have to accommodate a king whose following inscription occurs at Chilas VII (Gichi site) :

*Oṃ Namo Siṃha*

*Vīrāṅkita Rājāya Mahāgajapti*

*Bhaṭṭāraka Mahārāja Mahā*

*Rājādhirāja Amarsiṃha*

"Oṃ. Salutation to the king, marked with lion's power, the great lord of elephants, the great king bhattāraka, the great king of kings, Amarasimha."

Palaeographically this inscription may be placed slightly later than the inscriptions of Siṃhadvea. From the name Amarasiṃha, as he calls himself, it appears that he was one of the successros of Siṃhadeva.

It is from the fifth century A.D. onward that Buddhism once again reasserts itself in this area. The beginning is seen at Shatial, Thalpan I and Thalpan III. The style of art seen in the two latter places continued in the later art. But in seventh century A.D. we also find new influences coming from Kashmir. From Swat also influences came and contributed to the development of the Bodhisattva cult. We have epigraphic evidence of the Buddhist monks busy in their missionary work. At Chilas V we have an inscription reading. *Oṃ Vicharati Śramaṇaḥ*, i.e. "Oṃ. the monks move about (or preach)". At the same place one inscription gives the name of *Priyamitra Bhikshu*. A third inscription (no. 59) reads :

*Priyamitra vichativra* (correctly *vicharati*)

*i.e.* "Priyamitra moves about (or preaches)."

This monk's name is repeated in several other inscriptions. One long inscription (no 60) in small handwriting reads :

*Namo sattva-satyāya tathāgatāya namo raktamukhāya tathāgatāya Namo Śākyamunaye tathāgatāya namo bhikshor nyāya tathāgatāya*

*likhitaṃ Priyamitreṇa*

*Oṃ Chandraśūrasya*

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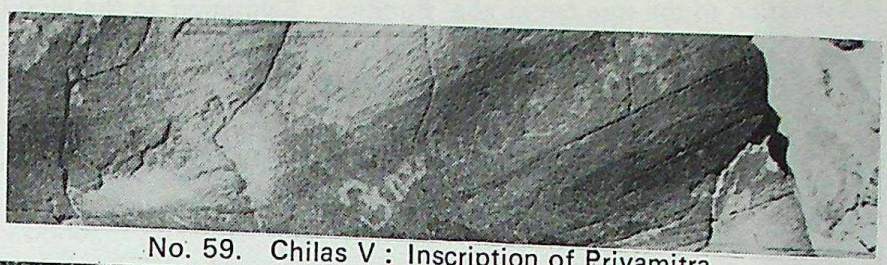
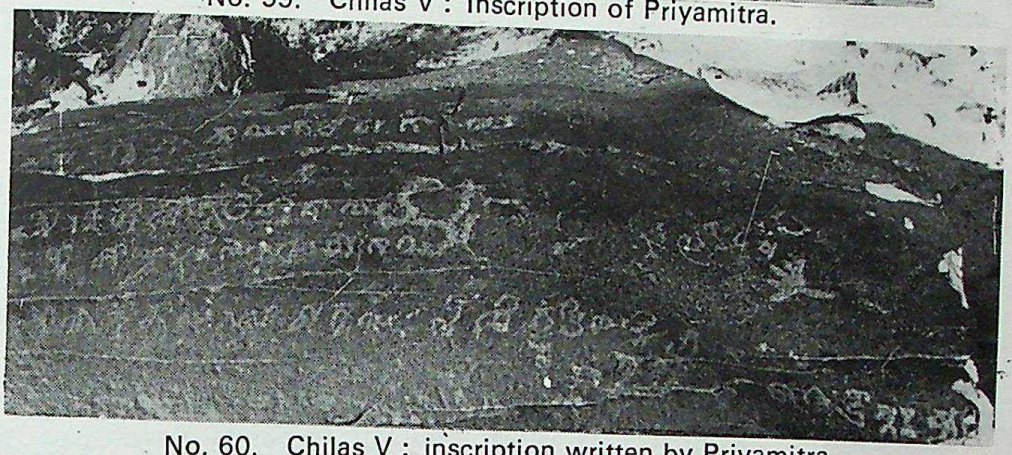
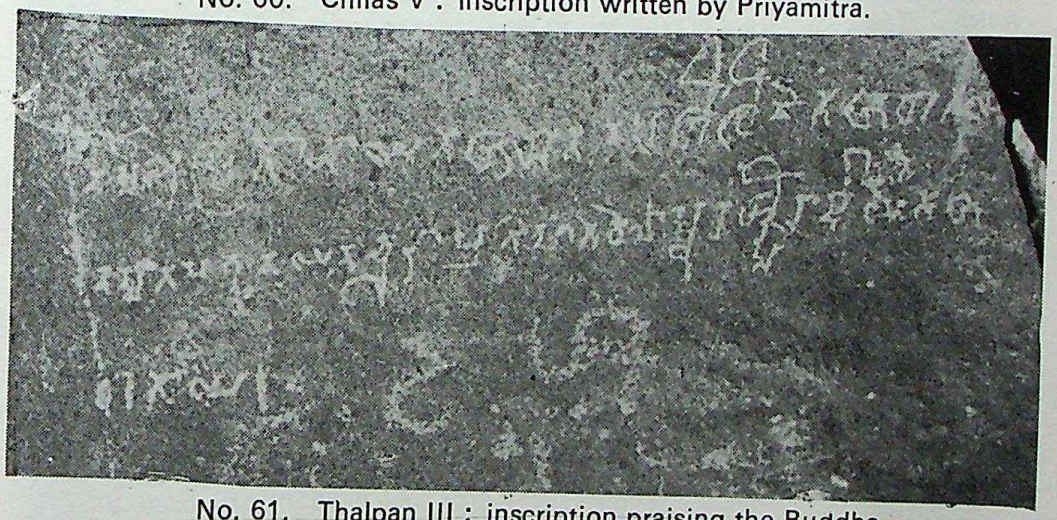


No. 59. Chilas V : Inscription of Priyamitra.



No. 60. Chilas V : inscription written by Priyamitra.



No. 61. Thalpan III : inscription praising the Buddha.

No. 62. Chilas V : *Vahadeva*, a local deity.

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"Salutation to the true being, the Buddha. Salutation to the blond-faced, the Buddha. Salutation to the sage of the Śākya, the tathāgata. Salutation to the principle of the monk, the Buddha".

"Written by Priyamitra"

"Oṃ. of Chandraśūra"

This last name may be that of the donor. Similar strain is found in other contemporary inscriptions from Thalpan. One inscription (no. 61) from the latter site reads: *Namo ādināmāya tathāgatāya namo śibira-tathāgatāya Namo tapata-nayana-chūḍāpratihata-velāmburaśmi-rājāya tathāgatāya* "Salutation to the first name, the Buddha. Salutation to the Buddha of the cave (?) Salutation to the Buddha, the king having unflinching splendour of flood-tide (i.e. coolness) as crest of the hot eyes."

Now if we turn to the evidence of the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, we hear of *Arhat* (Reverent) Madhyāntika, who is said to have erected a wonderful wooden figure of the Bodhisattva Maitreya in the valley of Ta-li-lo.[30] He writes : "From the time of the erection of this image the streams of the law (religious teaching) began to flow eastward". The same *Arhat* is credited to have spread Buddhism in Kashmir. It is further recorded : "Then the *Arhat*, having obtained this land by the exercise of his great spiritual power, founded 500 *saṅghārāmas*. He then set himself to procure by purchase from surrounding countries a number of poor people who might act as survitors to the priests. Madhyāntika having died, these poor people, constituted themselves rulers over the neighbouring countries. The people of surrounding countries despising these low born men, would not associate with them and called them *Kritīyas* (Ki-li-to). The fountains now have begun to bubble up (in token of the end of the law having come."[31] Later the pilgrim notes : "After Kanishka's death the *Kritīya* race again assumed the government, banished the priests, and overthrew religion."[32] What were "the neighbouring countries" where *Kritīyas* ruled ? As is confirmed from the evidence of Chilas II (see chapter IV), exactly this is the fate of Buddhism in the Chilas area, where after the Kushāṇas the local hunting people came into prominence alongwith their own religious beliefs. Could they be called *Kritīyas* ? One of the feature of their religion is the part that an animal played in it. One later representation (no. 62) from

30. S. Beal, *Op. Cit.*, p. 134.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

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No. 63. Chilas I : stūpa and later inscription of Śūra royal family.

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Chilas V shows a goat in outline with pecked marks on the body and having two curved horns. An inscription on its top right reads : *Śrī Vahadevasya*, i.e. "Of Śrī Vahadeva" (i. e. the deity Vaha). From the Sacred Rock of Hunza[33] an inscription under a goat, which is caught by a person, records *Vijaya Vahi*, i. e. "the conquest of Vahi". It seems that *Vaha* or *Vahi* was the hidden spirit behind a goat, which might have had some religious significance.

Still later Hiuen Tsang notes that a king of Himatala, of the country of To-hu-lo (Tukhāra) killed the king of *Kritīyas* and resettled the priests. But this again did not work out well. We are told, "As for the *Kritīyas*, as they had more than once been put down by the priests and their religion overturned, in lapse of time their enmity had increased so that they hated the law of the Buddha. After some years they came again into power. This is the reason why at the present time this kingdom is not much given to the faith and the temples of the heretics are their sole thought".[34] This description of Hiuen Tsang, although stated in connection with Kashmir, so well applies to our region, as we know from the archaeological evidence, it is possible that the Chinese pilgrim spoke in one breadth about the entire area.

Who was the king of the Himatala region who invaded this part ? The Chinese pilgrim locates this country in the northern region[35] and speaks of Śākya being its first ruler. According to him this ruler committed the invasion. But in the time of Hiuen Tsang Himatala was under the Huns.[36] It is therefore quite possible that the Huns were the invaders.

This issue of the Huns has been discussed before. It will be taken up again. At Chilas I between the KKH and the Indus river there are several inscriptions on a boulder, the script being a later development of the late Brāhmī, almost resembling protonāgarī, and hence may be dated in the 9th-10th centuries A.D. One important inscription (no. 63) is engarved underneath an earlier stūpa of beautiful execution, of a type so well known in the 7th century A.D. in this part. The lines of the inscrip-

33. A.H. Dani, *Op. Cit.*, p. 15.
34. S. Beal, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 157-58.
35. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 290.
36. Atreyi Biswas. *The Political History of the Huns in India*, Delhi, 1973, p. 34.

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No. 64. Chilas I : proto-nāgarī type of developed writing.

No. 65. Chilas I : proto-nāgarī type of developed writing.

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tion are not parallel to the horizontal base of the stūpa, proving that the two are not contemporary. The inscription begins with larger letters on the top but the letters get reduced in the later lines so much so that the last few words are difficult to read. This imbalanced setting again proves that the inscription was of a later date. The inscription reads :

*Chāhi*[37] *Śrī Vajraśūra*

*Dhanavaha*[38] *rājaputra Siṃghaśūra*

*Rājaputra Vyāghraśūra*

*Mantramaṇḍala-mahāmātya-Gikisila rājaputra Vyāghraśūra*

*Siṃgha (Śūra)* *mahāgajapati khaya mahāpīlupati*[39]

*tena kaṃdatāṃ varusha ājñe Paṇḍita Śukara*

*maheka. Subhra ..amrita .mahādeva Vyāghraśūra*

*Translation*

Śāhi (King) the glorious Vajraśūra.

Possessor of wealth, the prince Siṃghaśūra

the prince Vyāghraśūra

Gikisila, the great minister of the cabinet of ministers. The

Siṃgha (śūra) prince Vyāghraśūra

the great lord of elephant, lord of heavenly elephants

By him this *Varusha*[40] was engraved. By the order of Paṇḍita Śukara *Maheka* (the great one). Clear...nectar...Mahādeva. Vyāghraśūra.

Here we get a new dynasty of rulers. The father, who has the royal title of Śāhi appears to be a foreign ruler although he has Sanskritic names. His two sons also bear Sanskritic names. But the two titles of Vyāghraśūra, both having the same connotation, again speak of foreign extraction. The title, lord of elephants, appears to be bombastic rather than real because in this northern part elephants are not seen. The name of the minister Gikisila also sounds un-Sanskritic. But such names are common at this time. On the southern face of this very boulder four inscriptions (no. 64) are engraved :

(i) Śru Sadhalavala
(ii) Khakha Siṃgha
(iii) Śru Saparichaka kipata
(iv) Manāpurusha Samato.

---

37. This appears to be a local pronunciation of the title *Śāhi*, so commonly adopted by the rulers of this period.
38. This appears to be a technical term, something to do with finance.
39. Both these titles have the same connotation.
40. It is difficult to translate this word,

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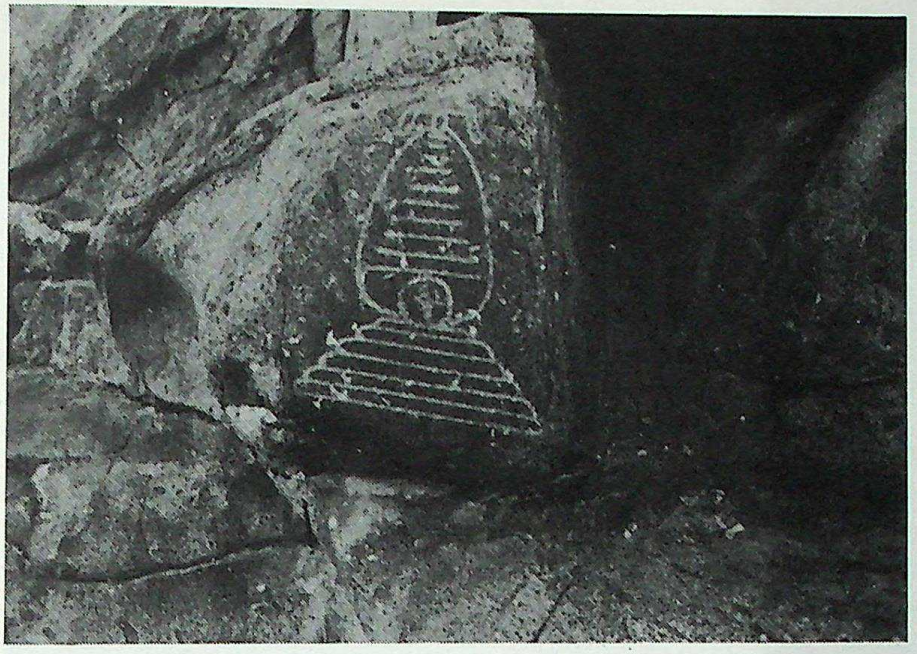
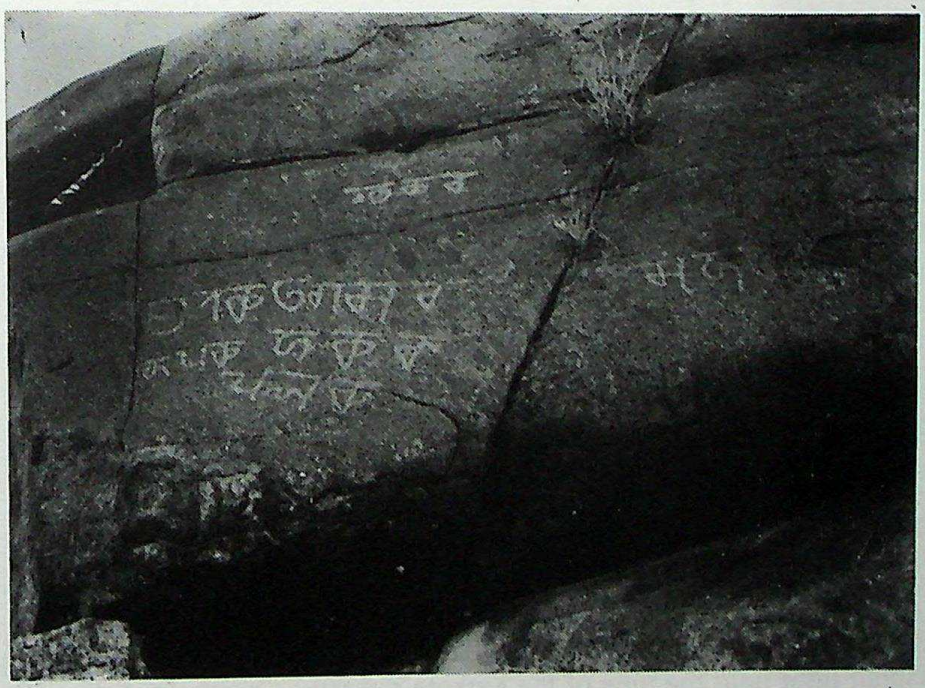


No. 66. Gondophares Rock ; a late temple.



No. 67. Gondophares Rock : mediaeval inscriptions.

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There is another group of inscriptions (no. 65) giving the following names :

(v) Chatru Chāha[41] Vajranandi
(vi) Palidapalda Śūra
(vii) Dilīkhamaṅgala
(viii) Thotiputra Thahukkha
(ix) Pasthi Pilvi Śimi
(x) Sri Malikya Va...

At different places on this boulder several other names of individuals are engraved. Some of them are :

(xi) Mraṅgevāka
(xii) Vapasila
(xiii) Khavala Aśpi
(xiv) Chhakachha
(xv) Chhayi Śūra
(xvi) Dhī Maheka
(xvii) Thama...
(xviii) Sayataṃ purusha lagala sala
(xix) Pilicha purusha khakha.

All these names form a group by themselves and bear close similarity with the name of the minister Gikisila. It seems that all these names belong to one linguistic group and may signify a common racial stock of people who assumed these names. Among them we have two names ending in Śūra. There is a third name (xx) Mahāśura appearing in another inscription. They no doubt compare very well with the royal names of Vajraśūra, Siṃghaśūra and Vyāghraśūra. As argued before they are new comers and do not appear to have been Buddhists because none of them is known to have engraved a stūpa. On the other hand the name of Paṇḍita Śukara Maheka, by whose order the long inscription was engraved, suggests that these people were followers of Hindu religion. The name ending *Aśpi* further suggests that they had something to do with the horses.

The title Śāhi was assumed by the Kushāṇa emperors and later by the Hun rulers of the Indus Valley. The reign of the Hun rulers in Kashmir right upto the time of the Karkoṭa dynasty is given in Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅgiṇi*. Their existence later has been traced by Dr. Atreyi Biswas.[42]

41. They appear to stand for Śatru Śāha, *i.e.*, "king of enemies".
42. *Op. Cit.*, Chapter VI.

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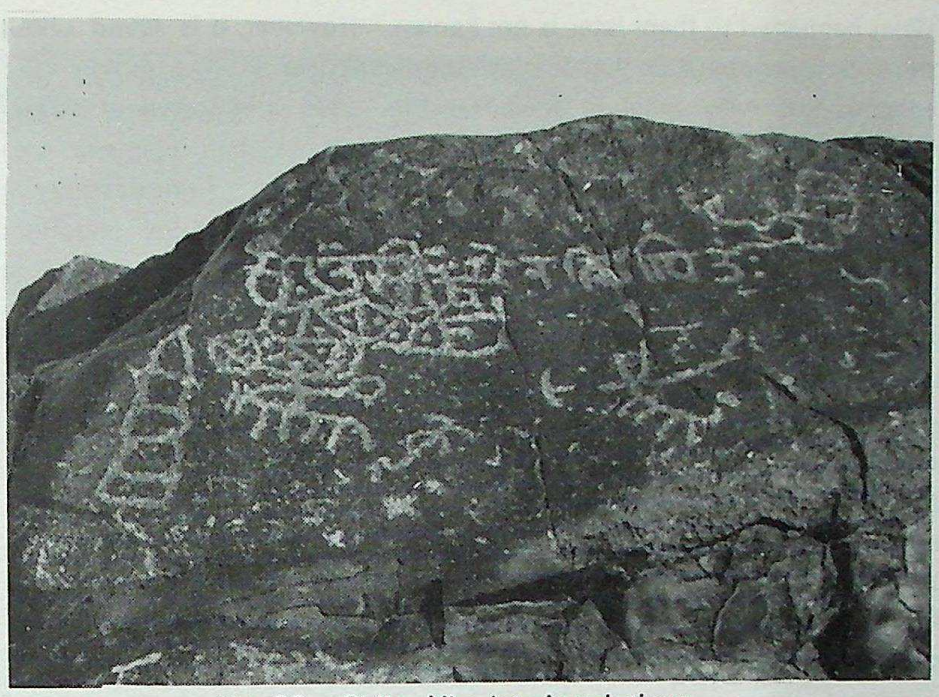
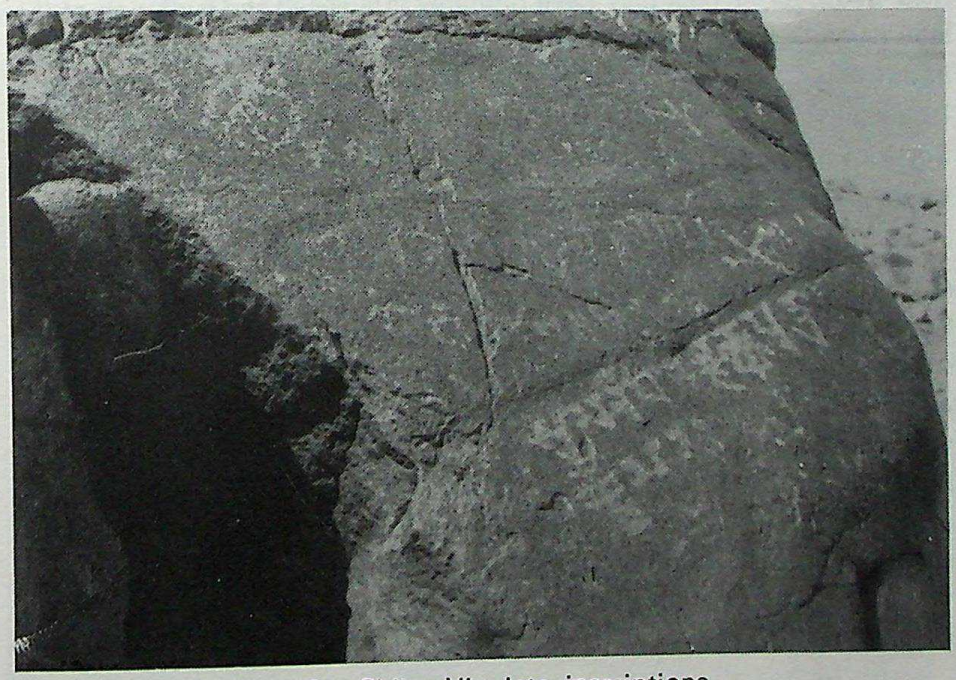


No. 68. Chilas VI : late inscriptions.



No. 69. Chilas VI : late inscriptions.

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What happened to them later is not known. However, it is round about the eighth century A.D. that a new people appear in this region (see chapter VI), who excel in horsemanship, used a new style of Brāhmī writing, engraved numerous temples, had *triśūla* as their emblem, preferred battle-axe and wheel as their ritual objects. Their dexterity in horse play and show of sword dance is unmatched. Another important addition is the representation of tiger with one of its front leg raised, a style of art probably borrowed from Iran. All these features suggest that there was probably some relationship of these people with the Huns, who, after their defeat in the Indus plains, might have pushed on to the secluded valleys of the north and established themselves. Or it may be that the remnants of the Hun power in the north, after the loss of the main imperial power, continued to quarrel among themselves with the result that one branch became powerful at one time and another branch at another time. However, they were strong enough to stop any incursion on the part of the Tibetans and they maintained their independence all through in the Chilas region.

If Hsiung-nu or Hsiung-na, applied to them by the Chinese, still held good, its survival may have probably influenced the evolution of the later name Śiṇā, as applied today to the land-holding class of the people in this part. It is quite possible that the Huns forgot their own Hunic language and adopted the language of the people whom they conquered. Some of the names enumerated above are still preserved as nick names by the Śiṇā people.

It is in this background that we can understand some other late carvings at the Gondophares Rock. Figure no. 66 shows a very crude type of a temple on a terraced pedestal with a circular fetish at the base of the interior. The temple is crowned by a *triśūla* and its interior has a series of horizontal lines, enclosed within a curved *śikhara*. This simplified version of a temple is more imaginary than real. The earlier examples of beautiful temples can be seen at Hodur. How this development took place is not well attested as there is much gap between this type and the earlier examples. On a nearby rock we get the following names in a writing (no. 67) which can be dated to the mediaeval period, sometime in the 14th or 15th century A.D. :

(i) Tachhara
(ii) Mahata
(iii) Janaka Ugasara

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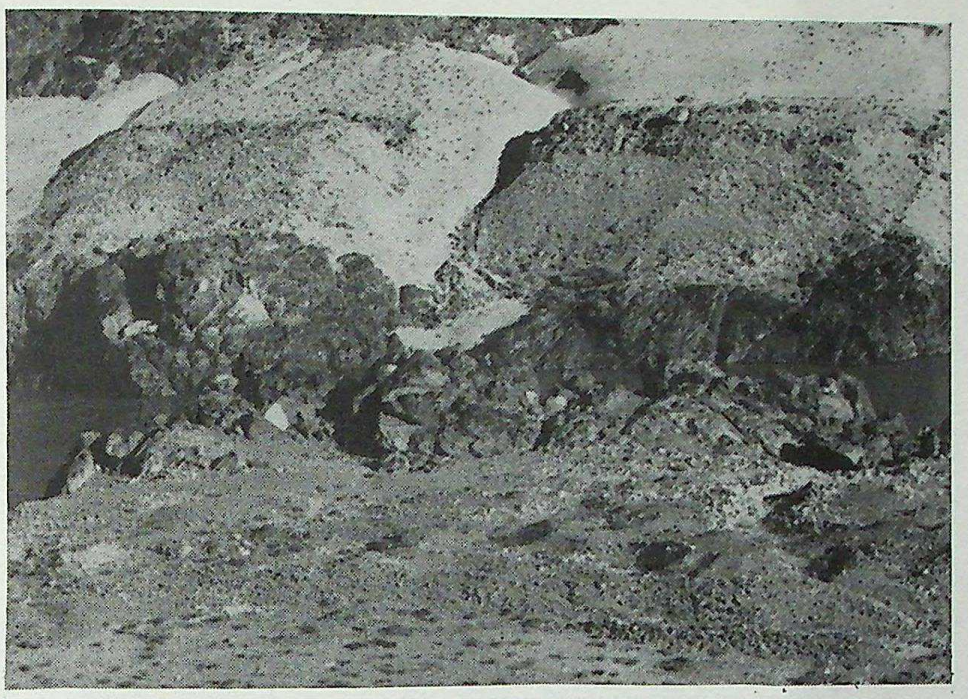

No. 70. Chilas II : general view of the rock pile.

No. 71. Chilas II : offering of a bowl to Bodhisattva.

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(iv) Kapaka Hakaka
(v) Palaka

All thess names correspond with the earlier names given above. The last evidence of writing comes from Chilas VI, engraved on a boulder, not far from the boulder on which the giant man is carved. There are several inscriptions in this late writing, one on the top of the other, and engraved on the earlier prehistoric carvings.

No. 68 shows a horse-rider carrying a circle and other dotted symbols in hand before a temple. Above this is a single line inscription reading :

*Bhrata Siṃghena likhitaḥ*, i.e. "Written by the brother Siṃgha."

No. 10 shows earlier prehistoric carving. On its side late writing has : *...Iha vachana...ya*

*Śreṭha Śuyamati pravāsa je putra Marma*

i.e. "the words of.....the business magnate, the death of the son Marma".

No. 69 shows two line inscription in an older writing :

*Sumana varāhāṅkaputra Kumāra*

"Sumana, the prince, son of Varāhāṅka".

There are many other names written here in different hands and in different periods. They may be visitor's names or names of the persons who were probably cremated in the neighbourhood on the bank of the Indus river. Such odd inscriptions continued here till very late time until the coming of Islam.

The identification of this last group of people will go a long way in unravelling the history of this part. The mounted horsemen are seen all over this area spreading right through Gilgit to Hunza and even beyond. It is in the identification of these horsemen that much of the pre-Muslim history of the region is concealed. Here a hypothetical suggestion has been made to see in them the last remnants of the Huns who probably intermixed with the local Śiṇā population and made themselves feudal lords.

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# CHAPTER IV

## ROCK CARVINGS OF CHILAS II

The name Chilas II, as is described in chapter I, is given to the second site, discovered in 1979, Chilas I being the name of the first site, also visited and partly described by Sir Aurel Stein.[1] The site lies close to the river Indus about a mile from the municipal checkpost of Chilas on KKH. A rough tractor road winds down to the site. On way there are a few carved and inscribed boulders (described at the end of this chapter) that indicate the direction down to the site.

During the summer (flood season) the Indus water flows very near the site and leaves behind sandy deposits on the northern (river) face of the rock. It is in this sand that the Soniwals wash gold and stay on under the rock shelter for months. The site consists of a rough rock pile (no. 70) sloping down towards the river. Actually there are two rock formations. It is only the western rock that has the carvings. As the surface of the rock is much weathered and cut up, the carvings are seen on different planes and faces, wherever smooth and flat space is available. This is so particularly on the southern side of the rock pile. But the northern side, i.e. the river face, has been scored and washed down by the Indus flood for centuries, and as a result several recesses have been formed, some of them giving the shape of alcoves. Smooth surface of such alcoves has

1. 'Archaeological Notes from the Hindukush Region', in *Journal of Royal Asiatic Society*, London, 1944, pp. 5-24.

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been utilized for carving. But then the northern side suddenly drops down and makes an almost flat surface. This flat surface and its sides have also been used for carving. Its river side has some important inscriptions. Still later the trickling of water from above has left water marks in several alcoves resulting in obliterating some of the figures and writings. But over-writing and engraving have done great harm to the earlier carvings. They no doubt help in building the chronology but at the same time they make the work of decipherment extremely difficult.

It is the river face of the rock that was first used for the purpose of engraving. Hence all the earliest figures and inscriptions are found on the vertical face of this side. Chronologically they can be dated to Scythian period (1st century B.C.) on the basis of Kharoshṭhī palaeography although some Kushāṇa period (second century A.D.) Kharoshṭhī inscriptions have also been noted. All such material will be treated under group 'A'. They will be described in order of recesses as they occur from east to west, each recess being numbered separately. It must, however, be remembered that there are later drawings made upon the earlier carvings, or by their side. These will be referred to in the course of the description. The majority of group 'B' is seen on the flat rock surface that lies in front of the vertical alcoves. They mostly belong to post-Kushāṇa period. Group 'C' includes the carvings seen on the southern side of the rock and they are associated with the late Brāhmī inscriptions of 6th-7th century A.D. Some of them may be even later.

Thus chronologically there are three main periods in the engravings at Chilas II :

Group 'A', falling between 1st century B.C. and 2nd century A.D.

Group 'B' dateable to 2nd to 5th centuries A.D. These are not associated with any writing.

Group 'C' assignable to 6th-7th century A.D. and even later.

**Kharoshṭhī palaeography :**

As the main concentration of Kharoshṭhi inscriptions in Chilas is at this site and as the dating depends on their character, it will be of interest to understand their special features. In general the Kharoshṭhī script, used here, follows the style seen in the Scythian inscriptions at Taxila. The particular deciding factor is the form of the dental 'Sa', whose head-form is half-closed. The vowel 'e' has its medial attached horizontally

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No. 72. Chilas II : upper portion of a scene, Maues, his soldiers, and captured ruler.

No. 73. Chilas II : lower left portion of the scene, stupa, horsemen and humble princes.

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to the right of the vertical and the vowel 'u' has its medial formed by a loop at the lower end of the vertical. But the ordinary medial 'u' is sometimes shown by a left horizontal, as seen in the syllable 'hu'. Angularity of letters in the Scythian period is stressed. The syllable 'mu' reduces the left vertical and attaches the short medial at an incline. The right hook of the letter 'bha' is attached slightly up. In the Kushāṇa period the head of the dental 'Sa' opens its mouth fully. The medial 'e' is attached at the lower end of the vertical at an incline. One important formation is the use of the medial 'ṛi' in the word *Kṛishṇa*. This form appears to have been derived from the form known in Brāhmī. This is further attested by the fact that the writer of some of these inscriptions appears to have been an Indian, who reveals his own name as Vasudata in the Brāhmī character of first century B.C.

## GROUP A

### Recess No. 1

The first picture is shown in no. 71. There are two Kharoshṭhī inscriptions on this face. Both are in the Scythian style :

(i) On the top there is a single line consisting of five letters reading *Bhada Aleka*. In this reading the fourth letter is rather difficult as the medial 'e' is actually an upper extension of the left tick of the proper letter form. *Bhada* stands for Sanskrit *Bhadra*. *Aleka* could be foreign name and may stand for Alexander. The inscription may be translated as "The noble Aleka (or Alexander)".

(ii) The second inscription follows the engraving of two humans. The right-hand person is standing, with his left hand akimbo and the right hand holding up a bowl in the act of offering to the seated figure on the left. The seated figure has his legs crossed in a fasion that they appear to make a pedestal for the tapering body and looplike head with only a dot specifying the face. The left hand is at the waist and his right hand is holding a bowl at the chest level. The whole scene may represent the offering of a bowl to the Bodhisattva. The inscription reads :

*Budhavoto Lavanae praṭhataka*
*i.e.* "Lavana established the Bodhisattva"

The word "Budhavoto" or "Budhaoto" occurs several times at this site and it no doubt stands for Bodhisattva. The name Lavana appears to be Scythian. The last word is very dim.

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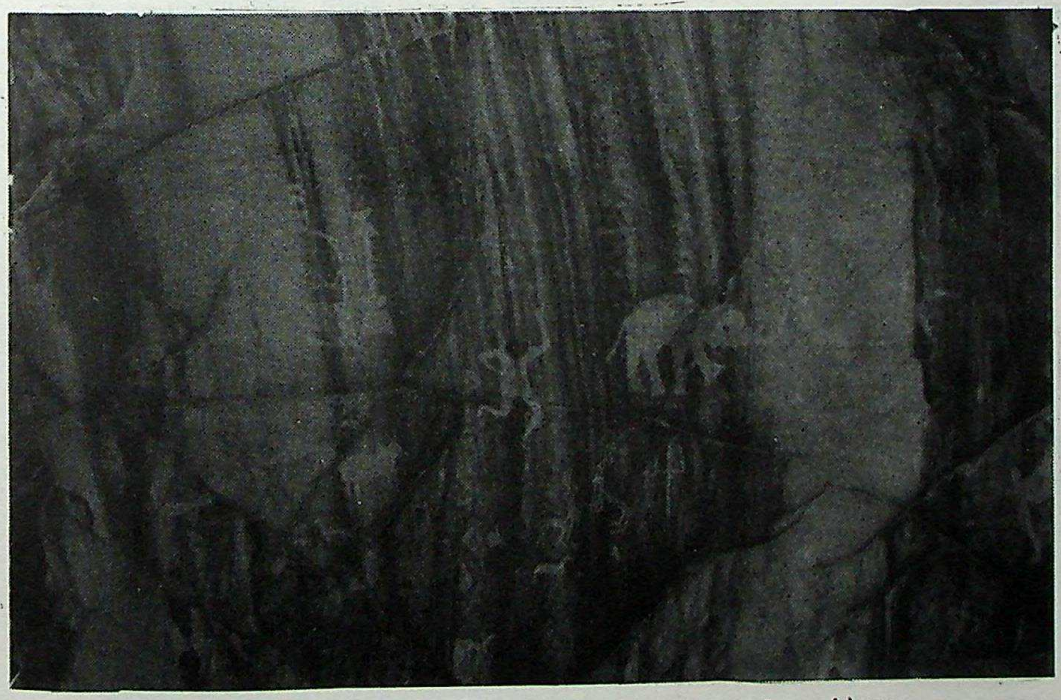
No. 74. Chilas II : lower right portion of the scene, prince, horse and inscriptions.



No. 75. Chilas II : stūpa, elephant, human and markhors.

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It is important to note that the human body in both the cases is drawn in outline. This introduces a new art form in human representation. In contrast to this art style we have below the figure of the Bodhisattva a later hunting scene, in which two standing humans, drawn in a single line depiction, are shooting with bows and arrows at ibexes. A single long-horned markhor is seen below.

Recess No. 2

Above the faint traces of a hunting scene, in which some bows and arrows play significant part, a historic theme is represented in this recess. A crooked line is drawn apparently to separate the main scene from the hunting representation, which has practically been obliterated.

The main attraction of the upper scene (no. 72) is the seated figure on the left on a high seat and the fat-bellied person on the right, in the same row, his right leg having been tied and pulled by a soldier. There are actually six soldiers with long spear in hand, the front soldier is apparently in conversation with the seated figure. The act appears to be a presentation of the captured fat person to the high personage on the high seat. In the next lower row a stūpa (no. 73) is depicted on the left. The stūpa is standing on a solid round base with a single umbrella, topped by a jar finial over the top of a round drum. This is the simplest type of stūpa found at this site. It seems to have been derived from the early form of Gandhāra stūpa. Three horse riders surround the stūpa on three sides. Another horseman is below the crooked line. Then follows an ibex probably belonging to hunting scene. Next is a Scythian soldier, with peaked cap on head, sword at the waist, his right hand akimbo and left bent up towards his forehead. In contrast to the robust horsemen and the soldier, there are three standing figures (no. 74) apart from hunters in between, so distinctly depicted, with their bodies solid-filled, male organ hanging below, legs bent as if in supplicating mood and hands either at the waist or bent. There are other horses lower down and also above. One of the horse is being strained by a horse-keeper.

The whole scene certainly represents a surrender scene of a dereated ruler to the victorious king. The Kharoshṭhī inscriptions supply the names. One inscription below the first standing soldier reads *Moga rajasa*, meaning "Of King Moga" This Prākṛit form of the name is generally identified with the Scythian ruler Maues, who is known to have ruled in the Indus country in the first century B.C. It is the first time that his

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No. 76. Chilas II : stūpa with Scythian soldiers.

No. 77. Chilas II : A crowned figure.

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name is recorded in the Northern Areas of Pakistan (Karakorum region). The name of the captured ruler is given on his right as *Gopadasa*. Still to the right there is another Kharoshṭhī inscription reading *Gopadasa Aksha-Putra*, meaning "Gopadasa, son of Aksha." There is a fourth Kharoshṭhī inscription at the end of the next row. It reads *Gopadasa Balaputra*, i.e. "Gopadasa, son of Balaputra". These Indianised names of the defeated persons indicate the influence earier received in this region. However, it may be noted that the artist has made a clear distinction in depicting the Scythian soldiers and horses from the representation of local persons. The first is shown by drawing the figures in outline although some of the horses also have solid bodies. In contrast the local human forms have solid filled-in bodies.

A Brāhmī inscription on the rite hand side (no. 74) reads Dhamada (sa) in a character which cannot be earlier than sixth century A.D.

Recess No. 3

This is the biggest recess on the site. Several figures, inscriptions and scenes are depicted at different levels. The later carvings of animals and men have disfigured much of the evidence but the greater destruction has been caused by the trickling of water from above, which has left deep scars of water marks making the figures dim and sometimes obliterated. It is in front of this recess that the flat rock extends. By standing on the top of the flat rock one gets a better view of the pictures.

(i) Starting from the left top, we first see a beautiful stūpa (no. 75) standing on a round base but it differs from the earlier example in so far as it has a wavy line on its drum in imitation of a garland is topped over by three umbrellas, and on its either side there stands a column on a round base, supporting a capital with an abacus. The addition of columns makes a new variety but the form of the stūpa proper remains the same.

(ii) To the right of the stūpa, a very lively man, whose head has disappeared under water-mark, is shown in running pose, driving an elephant still to the right. The left hand of the man is raised up while his right hand is at the waist. The body of the man is filled solid. The elephant, which has raised the trunk up and also lifted up the front leg, is filled solid.

(iii) Below the stūpa several animals have been beautifully drawn. The humped bull on the right and the peacock on the

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No. 78. Chilas II : Kharoshṭhī inscription of Moga and his *Kshatrapa* Ghoshamitra.

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left have their bodies filled-in solid. They are technically related to the stūpa. Other animals like horses, ibexes and markhors, and a *triśūla* to the right of the markhors (not in the picture) add variety to the animal world. The body of the markhors is shown by double lining.

(iv) On a still lower row (no. 76) first we see two horseriders facing left. The body of the horses is filled. Next is a solar symbol with rays emanating outside the orb. Then follows a new type of a stūpa on a wide square base and crowned by a crescent and two circles. The stūpa has a railing and arched gateway on the base and wavy line at the drum. To the right of the stūpa is a dim Kharoshṭhī inscription reading :

*Raghubirasa thubu*
*Praṭhakasa*
*śae dana*
*śae dana*

"The stūpa of Raghubīra (is) established (as a) royal gift." The last line is repeated twice. On the bottom of the right stūpa at least three Scythian soldiers on foot, with spear in hand and peaked cap on head, are walking towards the stūpa probably for veneration. A dog is seen among them.

(v) Still below (no. 77) is a person standing in *tribhaṅga* (thrice-bent body) pose, with a crown on head, left hand extended and holding a figure. His right hand is broken. The figure appears to be some foreign dignity, probably derived from western mythology.

(vi) There are several late hunting scenes in between. To the right above is an elephant carrying a log of wood. Still to the right is a hind part of a horse, the forepart being washed away by water mark.

(vii) Then follows a long Kharoshṭhī inscription (no. 78) partly washed away by water mark and partly disfigured by later animals in the first instance and by a horse rider and battle-axe in the second stage. The inscription is contemporary with a man standing to the right. It is written in the Scythian Kharoshṭhī style. It reads :

*Kaḍao Samudrasa*

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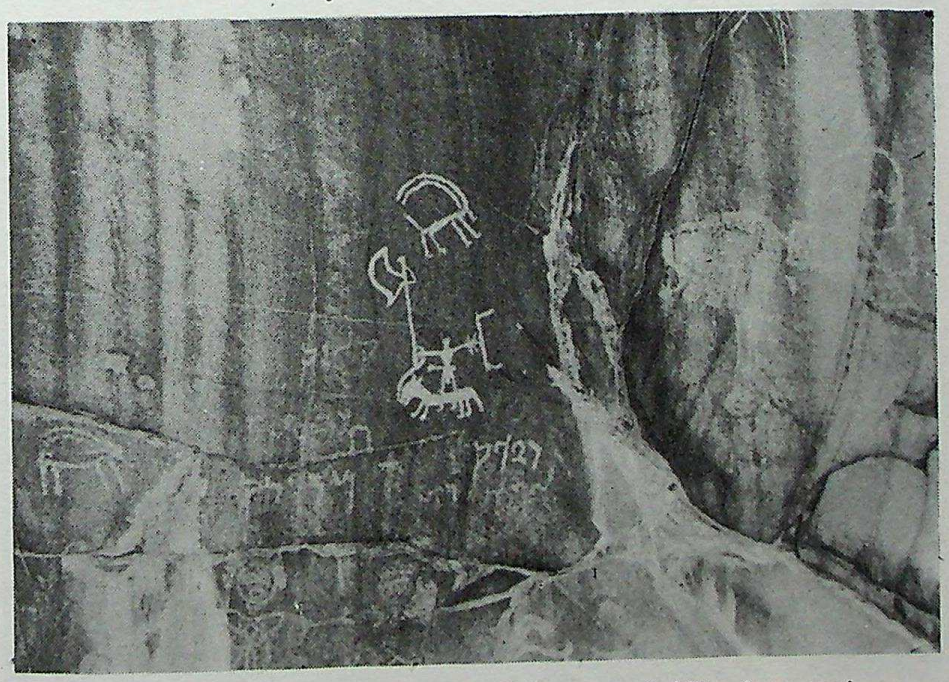
No. 79. Chilas II : horse rider, Bodhisattva on left, and Kharoshṭhī inscriptions.



No. 80 Chilas II : stūpas and figures of Vāsudeva and Baladeva.

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*Kakasa prathatasa*

*Samudrasenasa (kaḍao)*

*Ghoshamitrasa (putrasa Kakasa) Mogasa*

*Mahatakasa (Kshatrapasa)*

*.. .....ka thavati*

*Translation*

"Construction of Samudra

Establishment of Kaka

Construction of Samudrasena

Established by Ghoshamitra (son of Kaka), the governor of Moga (Maues), the Great."

The standing person to the right is drawn in the same hand as the writing. He has a sharp nose, almond-shaped eyes, rounded chin and is bare-footed. His body is drawn in double line and he is holding a stūpa in his left hand. By his side there is another solid votive stūpa. Could this figure be of one of the person named in the inscription ? The translation given above has not taken into consideration the genetive case used in the words because such mistakes are very common in the inscriptions here. The name of Kaka is repeated in another inscription. All these names are local.

(viii) Below the inscription, and partly defacing it, are several animals and a horse-rider, including a markhor and ibexes wandering freely. The horse-rider is standing on a horse holding a cross-bow. This style of horse-rider is very well known in the later period and it may help in dating this picture (see chapter VI). While the markhor shows the body in double line, other animals are drawn in single line.

(ix) The horse-rider described above is contemporary with another horse-rider in front of the standing man. In this particular case the rider has his body depicted in double line and his horse so beautifully drawn is solid-filled. Below the man is a battle-axe of fan-shape with the handle pierced through its hole. This battle-axe became the hall-mark of a people whose culture is described in chapter VI.

(x) Moving now towards the end of this recess, we note six different kinds of objects depicted on the surface. The first is a series of Kharoshthī inscriptions. Then come three standing

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No. 81. Chilas II : Bodhsiattva and stūpa.

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deities. Then we see three stūpas. On the top right is a seated figure (of the Buddha) in meditation pose. In the middle is a horse-rider of an entirely new type. He is holding a battle-axe in his right hand. The same battle-axe is repeated twice a little below. Finally we see ibexes, markhors, symbols like hatched squares and circles and one human with his body crossed and his hands stretched sideways but bent at the ends.

(xi) First, the Kharoshthī inscriptions, which are all in Scythian style.

Top line (no. 79) : *Samudrasa*, meaning "Of Samudra"
Second line (no. 79) : *Śama (ṇa)sa Gomasa*, meaning
"Of *Śramana* (*i.e.* monk) Goma".
Third line to the right (no. 79) : *Rahulasa*, meaning ',Of Rahula"
Third line to the left above the standing figure (no. 79) :
*Budhaotasa*, meaning "Of Bodhisattva".

Fourth line on the right (no. 79) :
*Muilasa Ranaka(sa)*
*i.e.* "Of Muila Ranaka."

Fifth line below the standing deity and partly defaced by an ibex :

*(Budha)otasa*, meaning "Of Bodhisattva".
Below the seated flgure (of the Buddha) on the right (no. 81) :
*Budhaotasa i.e.*, "Of Bodhisattva."
and *Rahulasa*, *i.e.* "Of Rāhula"

Above the right standing deity (no. 80) *Baladebo* and to his left *Rahulasa*, *i.e.* "Of Rāhula"

Above the left standing deity Rahulasa, *i.e.* "Of Rāhula", and slightly to his left *Vasudebo*.

To the right side of the figure of Baladeva and partly defaced by the figure of a markhor it is written *Ghoshamitrasa*, *i.e.* "Of Ghoshamitra".

(xii) The three standing deities are unique of their kind. As they are all labelled, their identification is certain. The left deity is described as *Bodhisattva* but there is hardly any known attribute by which he could be recognised. However, the standing deity, who is partly defaced by water mark, has a broad round face, almond-shaped eyes, oval mouth, curly hair on head, ears elongated, probably both hands akimbo. It is almost a doll-like portrayal.

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No. 82. Chilas II : Buddhist monk before a stūpa.

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The two standing deities on the right (no. 80) have different head-gear : the right figure has a crown and the left one has a crescent-topped headdress. Both of them are wearing Indian dhoti. The left hands of both of them are akimbo. They can be easily identified by the attributes in their right hands. The right-hand figure, described as *Baladebo* (a Hindu god), is holding a spear ending with a plough at its lower end. The second deity, described as *Vasudebo* (another name of Kṛishṇa) is holding a discuss in his right hand. This is the earliest representation of these two Indian deities[1] with iconographic detail and name.

(xiii) The seated figure (no. 81), which is labelled as *Budhaotasa*, is entirely different from the standing figures. Apparently the figure appears to be Buddha but the label says that it is Bodhi-sattva. The creation of this figure at such an early date speaks of the attempts made for this purpose here. The origin of its form can be traced from the neighbouring stūpa which gives the outline from which the figure can be derived. The addition of legs, hands and face to the stūpa led to the making of this figure.

(xiv) Of the three stūpas the middle one is a simple outline. On the left top (no. 80) a stūpa stands on a wider square base, to which steps have been added. Wavy line at the drum indicates the garland. To the left of the stūpa is an elephant facing left. The third stūpa is crudely drawn and appears to be later in date. It rests on a pillared base and the drum is crowned by a jar with a finial and imitation of side banners.

(xv) The new type of horse-rider standing on the horse introduces a new style, as was noted earlier. Here the rider is holding a battle-axe in his right hand and a cross-bow in the left. The type of battle-axe and that of cross-bow are hall-marks of a new people.

**Recess No. 3**

At the extreme right end of this face, almost at the corner, there is a small alcove which shows later horses and ibexes on the left with a human probably shooting at the ibex. The body of the top horse is solid. On the right is a memorable representation of a Buddhist monk approaching, with an incesne burner in hand, to worship before a stūpa. Below

1. On a coin of Agathocles from Ai-Khanum both these deities appear but no name is written. See Remy Audovir et Paul Bernard. Tresor de Monnaies Indiennes et Indo-Grecques d' Ai Khanoum (Afghanistan)", Revue numismatique, 6e serie-Tome XVI, 1974, pp. 7-10, fig. 1 &/pp. 13-14, fig. 5.

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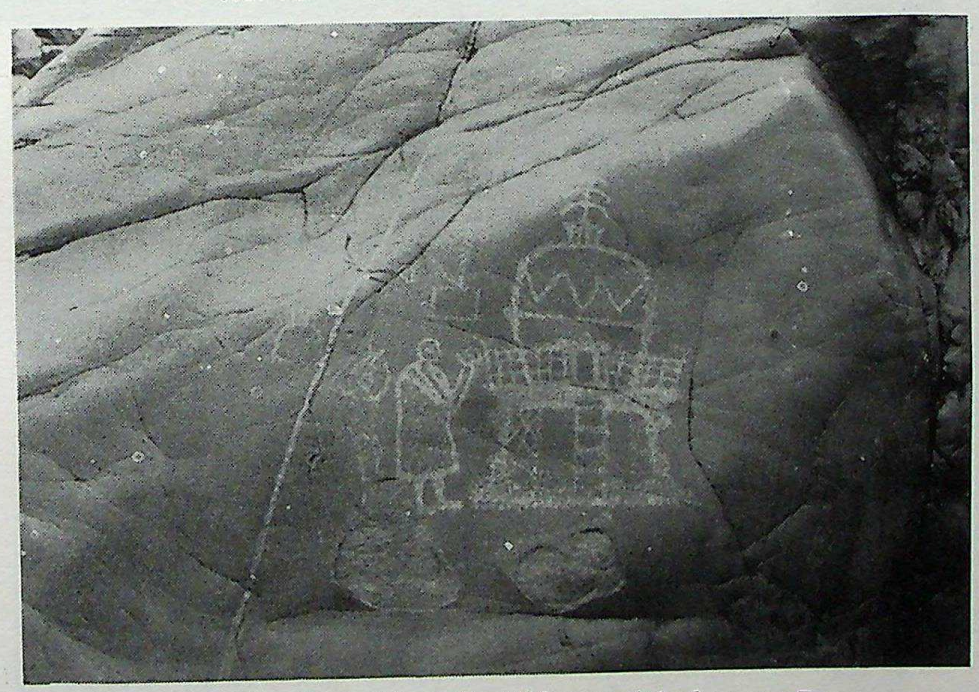
No. 83. Chilas II : Śakamuni (Buddha).



No. 84. Chilas II : A Buddhist monk before a stūpa.

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the stūpa there is a Kharoṣṭhī inscription in Scythian style (no. 82) :

*Budharakshitasa* i.e. "Establishment of a donation. of Budharakshita"
*Dana praṭhakasa*

The stūpa is standing on a double square base with a railing and an arched gateway, to which approach is provided by steps. In the middle of the drum a wavy line imitates the garland. Over the drum is a solid *harmikā*, crowned by a jar and pinnacle, on either side of which hangs down linear banner. The monk who is barefooted, is putting on a long flowing robe which conceals his body. His head, eye and nose are of the same form as that of the seated figure described earlier. On the top is another pilgrim walking to left with a load hanging behind his stick on the shoulders The load is squarish in shape. He is also putting on a long robe, belted at the waist, and also a peaked cap. In his right raised hand he is holding a water jar. The pilgrim appears to be Central Asian.

To the left of the monk there is an unfinished half-figure in profile. To the extreme right below is a *svāstika*.

## Front Rock Surface

We leave the flat rock immediately infront of the tall alcoves and come down to the rock pile further ahead towards the river. In the hollow made in between the rock, two important carvings are seen besides late animal carvings :

(i) First is a strange anthropomorphic figure (no. 83) with his left hand akimbo and right hand extended. The body is filled solid. The head is represented by a stūpa with a pinnacle on its top. It is the Kharoṣṭhī inscription across this stūpa which identifies the figure. The inscription reads :

*Saka (mu)nisa, i.e.* "Of *Śākyamuni*", a name applied to the Buddha. The last letter is to the left of the stūpa. This is no doubt a strange creation of the figure of the Buddha in the Scythian period.

(ii) A little further is another type of stūpa being worshipped by a monk (no. 84). The stūpa is standing on a high plinth with pillars at the corners, to which access is provided by steps—a type well-known in Gandhāra. On this plinth there can be seen a railing and an arched gateway in the middle. The drum has

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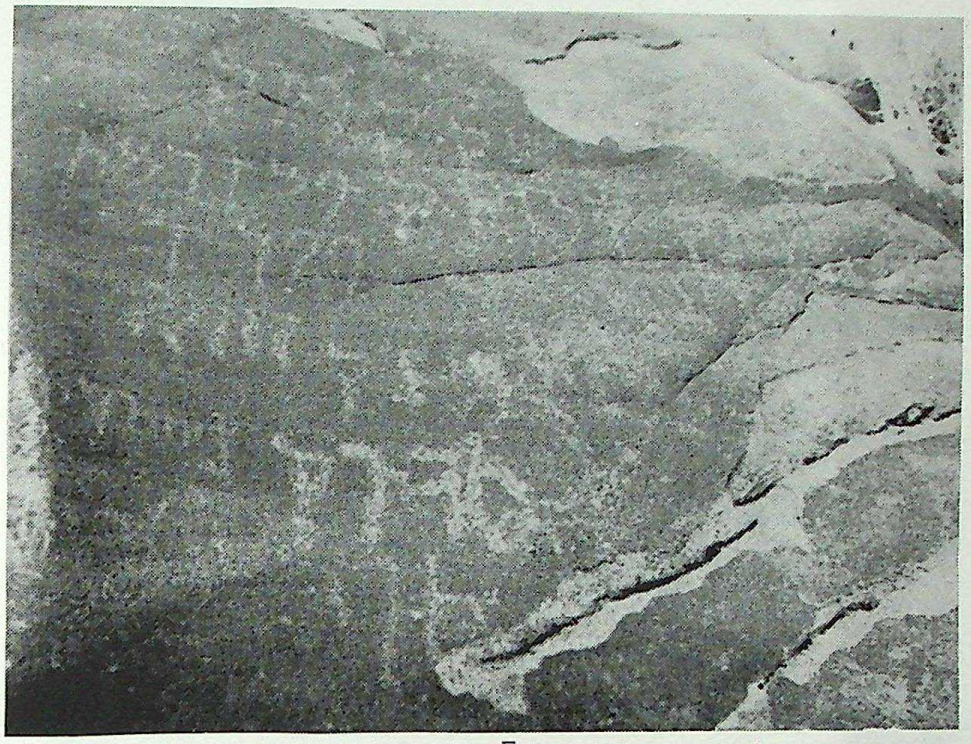

No. 85. Chilas II : Kharoshṭhī inscriptions on the northern face.

No. 86. Chilas II : stūpa of Śivadāsa.

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its lower parts marked away by a straight line. The dome has a wavy line in the middle, topped over by a *harmikā* and three umbrellas. To the left are two simple votive stūpas. On the left side a bare-footed monk, in his long monkish robe, is holding an incense burner in his hands. Behind him is another person holding something in his hands above his head. On the top is a Kharoshṭhī inscription reading :

*Puśiena Onivastarena*

"By Onivastara of Puśia". Could Puśia be Poshapura, *i.e.* Peshawar, mentioned in the Ārā inscription of Kanishka II ?

(iii) Coming now to the northern face of the rock, we note a series of Kharoshṭhī inscriptions at a height :

(a) A lone inscription (no. 85) on the top right reads :
*Budharakshitasa*, *i.e.* "Of Budharakshita."

(b) A long inscription reads :
*(Mo)gasa(Ma) hatakasa*

*Kshatrapasa Sidhalakasa etitha vatika aharetha*

"Of the great Moga (i.e. Maues). This building of the governor Sidhalaka was established."

Sidhalaka appears to have been a second governor in the time of the Scythian ruler Maues.

(c) *Paṭikhade*
Sam 20 20 20 20 20
"Established in the year 100".

It is difficult to say whether this inscription is connected with (b) above. What is the era to which the date 100 can be assigned is also not clear.

(d) At the bottom there is another inscription :
*Praṭhakasa*
*Pharaonasa*

"Establishment of Pharaona".

(e) After a break there is another inscription :
*Mahatasa Lavikasa*
i.e. "Of the great Lavika".

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No. 87. Chilas II : A Bodhisattva.

No. 88. Chilas II : stūpa of Bahae and Vataida.

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Could Lavika be another Scythian ruler ?

(f) To the right of (d) is another inscription :

*Kakasa*, i.e. "Of Kaka". This Kaka should be identified with the same name occurring in Recess no. 3 above.

## Western Face

There are several recesses on this face as well. The carvings have been done in the recesses as well as on the flat surface on the rock that intervene in between them.

(i) First we see a simple stūpa (no. 86) in outline on a plinth which has concave sides, a *harmikā* over the dome, covered by three umbrellas. To its right is a Kharoshṭhī inscription in Scythian style, engraved in a bold fashion :

*Śivadasasa*, i.e. "Of Śivadāsa".

(ii) To the right of the above stūpa is a crude standing human (no. 87) with hands extended sideways. Above is a Kharoshthi inscription—*Budhaotasa*, i.e. "Of Bodhisattva". Most probably the inscription has nothing to do with the human representation.

(iii) Then comes another stūpa (no. 88) standing on a square plinth. Its round drum is separated by a horizontal line from the dome, above which is a square *harmikā*, covered by three umbrellas, from which hangs down a banner to the left. To the right of the umbrella is a late animal, drawn in double line. To the left of the stūpa is a later human standing with arms extended sideways. To the right of the stūpa is a five-line Kharoshṭhī inscription in Scythian style :

*Bahaena cha thubu*
*(o) ḍito vatai*
*dena śaa o-*
*ḍito thu-*
*bu.*

*Translation*

"The stūpa was made by Bahae and the stūpa was made by Vataida, the *śao* i.e. *Shāo* ("King")."

It seems that the stūpa was made by two persons named in the inscription. The identity of this king is not known. Below the stūpa

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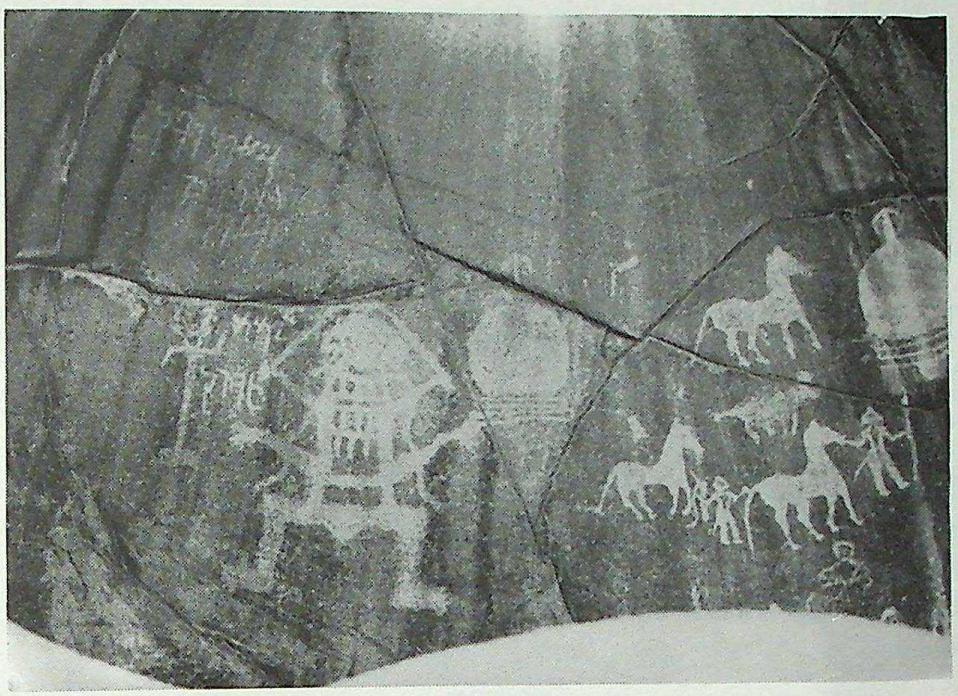

No. 89. Chilas II : Hāriti, stūpas and Kushāna inscription.

No. 90. Chilas II : stūpa with steps

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there is a much later horse rider, standing on horse with a battle-axe in right hand and cross-bow in the left hand. The horse has a solid body.

### Recess no. 1 on the western face

(i) On the top left in this recess there is a three-line Kharoshṭhī inscription (no. 89) in the Kushāṇa style. It is written in a free hand and shows the mouth of the letter 'S' open. It reads :

*Vaeshkasa Kaisaha (ra) (sa)*
*rajatirajasa*
*devadevasa*

The first word could also be read as *Jhashkasa*. Whatever may be the reading, the word no doubt stands for the Kushāṇa king Vajheshka, the father of Kanishka II. The first letter of the second word is not fully written. As it is written, it gives no sense. Most probably the right hook of the letter is inadvertantly omitted. The last letter should better be read as 'Ra' than 'Sa'. Hence I take the word to be *Kaisara*, a royal title.

*Translation*

Vajheshka, the Kaisara, the king of king, the god of gods".

This is the only royal Kushāṇa inscription found at Chilas. The assumption of the title *Kaisara* again links him up with his western allies and recalls the similar title assumed by his son. The manner in which the inscription has been written in a corner does not give full justice to the king. The style of writing is also very faulty. It may be that good Kharoshṭhī writers were not available here during the Kushāṇa period.

(ii) Below the above inscription there is a strange representation (no. 89), which has two legged seat, on which stands a stūpa in the middle with a head-like crowning element. From the shoulder hangs down a banner on each side. The head is bracketed probably imitating a halo. On either side of the body a lion juts out, back to back, in a fashion that the whole makes a curve. It seems that here an attempt is made to make an anthropomorphic figure. To the right of the figure is an emblem on a post, crowned by a plough. The inscription on the left in Scythian Kharoshṭhī reads :

*Hariti*
*prathakasa i.e.* "Establishment of Hāriti",

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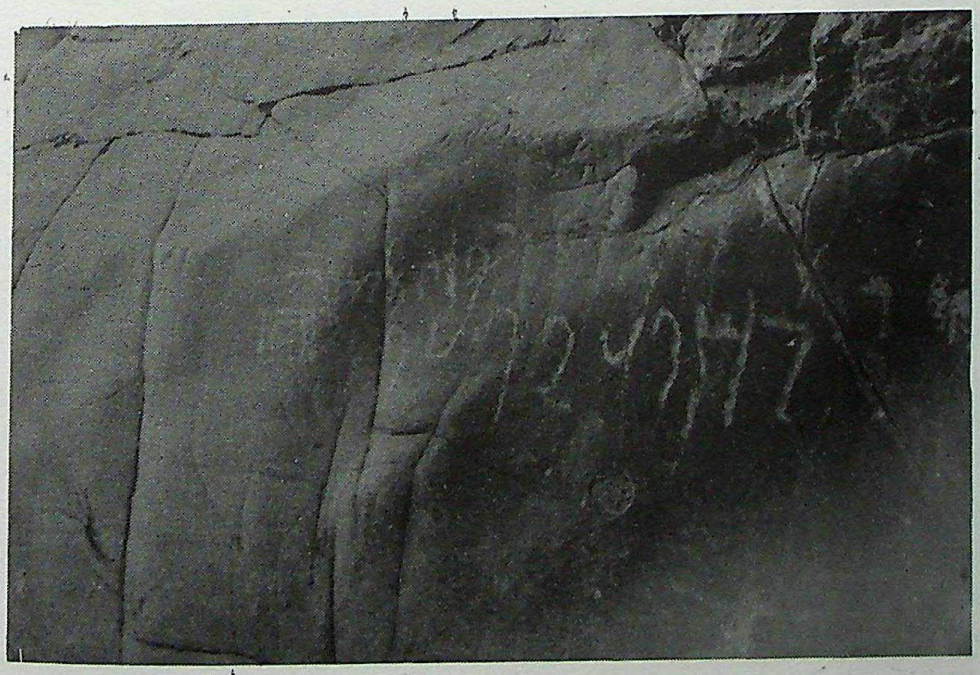
No. 91. Chilas II : standing Śiva.



No. 92. inscription about Maheśa.

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It is because of this inscription that the figure can be identified with Hāriti, so well known in Buddhist iconography as a goddess who began later to love children. In Gandhāra art she is the consort of Pañchikā. But there the representation is entirely different. Such a figural type of Hāriti is hardly known.

(iii) To the right of this figure is another solid stūpa standing on a triple terrace and crowned by a single umbrella. Still to the right is another stūpa (no. 89) of the same type, towards which Scythian soldiers, who have alighted from the horses, are approaching. The soldiers are putting on peaked cap and tight-fitting dress and have spear in hand. In between the horses there is a dog.

(iv) Below the above stūpa there is a fighting scene. The central figure is a mounted horseman charging another horse rider armed with sword, spear, arrows and bow. Kharoshṭhī inscription in Kushāṇa style reads : Mahākshatrapasa Raṭha .... *i.e.* "Of the great governor Raṭha " It seems that the person named here was a Kushāṇa *Mahākshatrapa*. Unfortunately his full name is not preserved.

**Recess no. 2 on the western face**

(i) On the left side of this recess there is a significant stūpa (no. 90), the dome of which has two shells. The inner shell is smaller, has a rounded base and a head-like cap. With a little more imagination this could be taken for the supposed linear base of a seated figure of the Buddha, as has been discussed before in the case of a figure in the northern face. The outer shell has a blob at the top and its base is flat. A flight of steps gives access to it. Apparently the whole engraving looks incomplete because such a simplified stūpa is not in consonance with the other stūpas of the time. However, its shape does make a suggestion for the possible figure of the Buddha that must have been made easier to create on its basis. To the right of this stūpa is a small circle.

(ii) Below the above stūpa is a simple standing human figure (no. 91), having a crown on the head, a club in the right hand but the left hand ends in a twisted curve, probably representing a noose. His body makes a rectangle and his male organ hangs below. To the left is a Kharoshṭhī inscription in Kushāṇa style :

*Śevasa*, meaning "Of Śiva"

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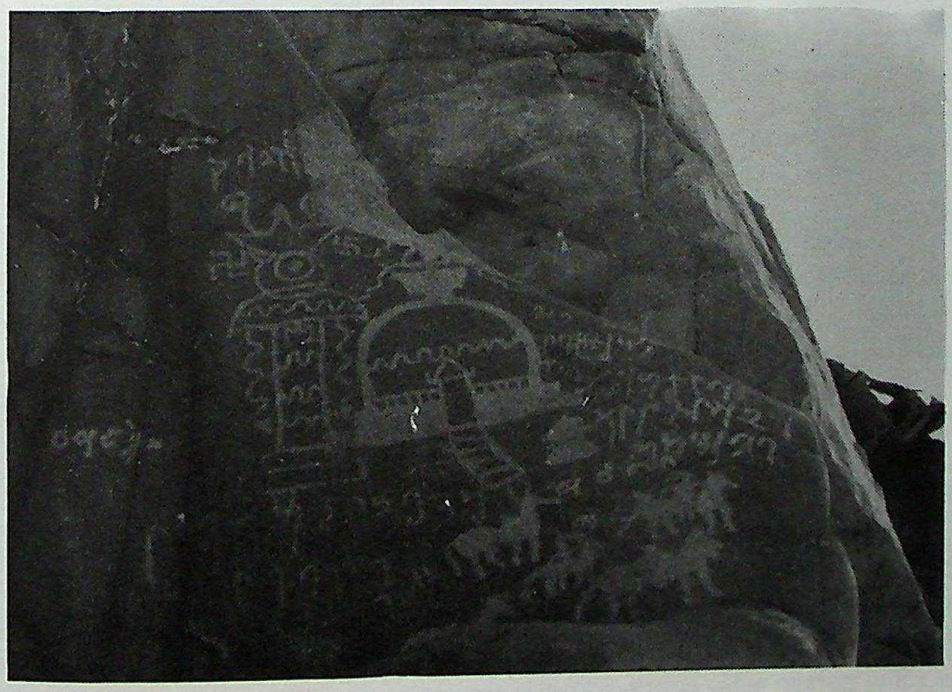
No. 93. Chilas II : Scythian soldiers before a stūpa.



No. 94. stūpa of Rāhula.

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There is another Kharoshthī inscription (no. 92) to the right in the same style, which reads :

*Iśidibo*
*Vareamahasa Maheśa*

*I.e.* "The god Īśa. Maheśa of Vareamaha."
Both the names *Iśa* and *Maheśa* are given to the Indian god Śiva, whose figure was so popularly represented in Kushāṇa coins. But the style of the figure engraved here is of an entirely different kind. However, three iconographic details, *viz.* a club in hand, a noose in another and the phallic expression are attributes of this god.

(iii) On the right side of the recess (no. 93) there is a stūpa with horsemen, and on its fringe there is another stūpa with animals. The first stūpa (no. 94) has a great resemblance to an earlier example (no. 84), except that the height of the present stūpa is raised by a double terrace and that the steps to the first terrace are at an incline. The lower terrace has pillars at the four corners. Both the terraces have railings but no arched gatoway. A wavy line at the drum imitates a garland. It supports a *harmikā* with three umbrellas as the crowning element. There are five Scythian horsemen passing by. Three of them have alighted from their horses but two are still on horseback. There is a Kharoshṭhī donation label on the top right but it is too much washed to give full reading. However, it speaks of the stūpa of a *Kshatrapa* (governor), whose name is lost.

(iv) The stūpa (no. 94) on the fringe is squattish as it stands on a single terrace with a railing on its top. Steps lead to the arched gateway. A wavy line is at the drum. Over the *harmikā* there was an umbrella finial but that is now broken. However, a banner hangs down from its either side. To the left of the stūpa is a beautiful column on a double base supporting a canopy, topped over by a moon with a circle within. Banners hang down on its either side and across its shaft. The final crowning element is the symbol of *triratna* (three jewels of Buddhism). There is also a svāstika on its either side. To the bottom right of the stūpa we have an incense burner. Below the stūpa a bull and three horse-riders are represented. There are several inscriptions around this stūpa. On the top : *Rahulasa*, meaning "Of Rāhula". He is most probably the same person who engraved other figures in the northern face of this rock.

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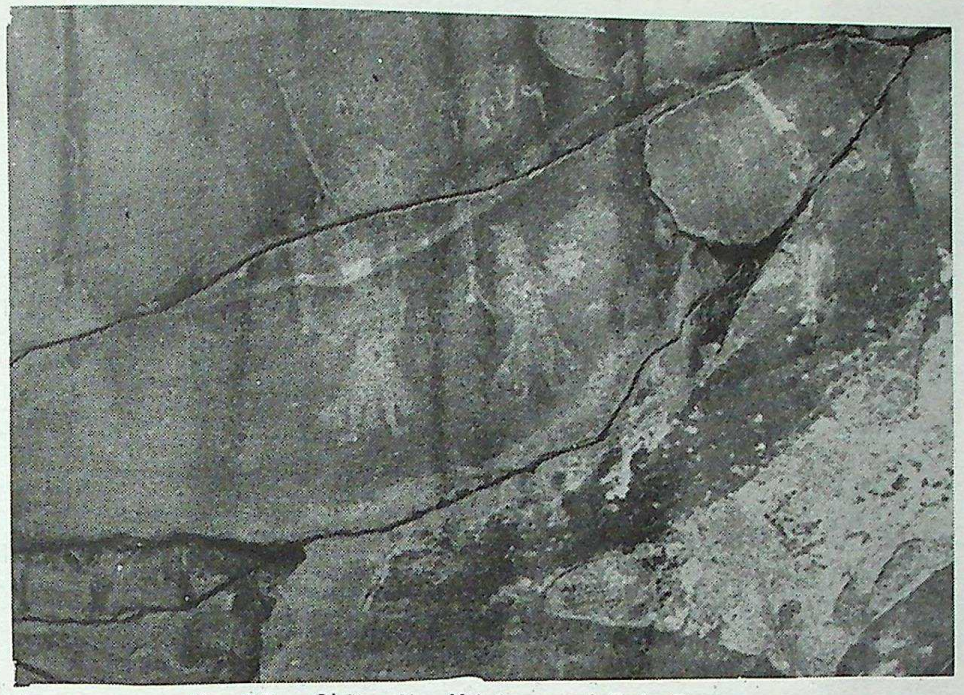

No. 95. Chilas II : Kṛishṇa and Balarāma.

No. 96. Chilas II : Inscription of Dharmoṭa.

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On the right the long Kharoshthī inscriptions reads :

*Mijupriena*
*Jina thubu*
*Rahulena kanena cha*
*aodito (thu) bu*

"The stūpa (called) Jina stūpa was built by the humble Rāhula, lover of *Miju* (*i.e.* the Majjhima school of Buddhism)." This inscription confirms the evidence of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, who speaks of the Arhat Madhyāntika responsible for the spread of Buddhism in this region. It is probably because of his teaching that this school became popular in this part.

Below the column another Kharoshthī inscription reads :

*Budhaotena Drobilaena*
*Kaboaena*

Although all the words end here in instrumental case, yet it seems that the engraver has made a grammatical mistake. The reading is clear. If the mistake is corrected, the meaning could be "The Bodhisattva (was built) by Drobila, a Kaboa (*i.e.* a person from Kambuja country)."

The word Kambuja or Kamboja occurs in the Aśokan Rock Edicts. It is generally identified with modern Hazara area.

Still to the left and interpolated in between the two Kharoshṭhī inscriptions there are at two places the same name written in Brāhmī of the same period, reading *Vasudatena, i.e.* "by Vasudatta". It appears that he was the person responsible for the actual engraving. By giving his own name in Brāhmī he is here revealing his own place of origin.

**Recess no 3 on the western face**

(i) In this recess we have two beautifully drawn standing human figures (no. 95) with a flowing dress covering their body. The left figure has a crown on his head but the right one has a crescent-topped headgear. Both of them are holding a club in their right hand. The left figure is holding a plough-topped banner in his left hand and the right figure is having a discuss in his left hand. These iconographic details are sufficient to identify the left figure with Baladeva or Balarāma and the right figure with Vasudeva or Kṛishṇa. Here we have a different style of representing these figures from what we see in no 80.

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No. 97. Chilas II : fighting scene.

No. 98. Chilas II : animal before a structure.

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Above them there is a Kharoshṭhī inscription in the Scythian style reading :

*Rama-Kṛishṇasa Dhamaputrasa*

"Of (Bala) rāma (and) Kṛishṇa, (erection) of Dhamaputra."

Here it is important to note the forms of the Kharoshṭhī letter *Kṛi* and the conjunct *shṇa*, very unusual in the Kharoshṭhī palaeography.

(ii) Below the above representation is another row of carving showing an ibex on the right and three standing humans on the left.

**Flat Surface of the Rock in the Northern Face**

The carvings on the flat rock surface in front of the third big recess facing the river are careless drawings of hunting scenes where men are either standing or shooting at the ibexes and markhors The animals are drawn by single line depiction. It is rare that the body of the animals is solid. However, the humans, whose male organs are marked, have solid bodies with their hands akimbo. These animals and hunting scenes are similar to those that deface the Kharoshṭhī inscriptions. Hence they are later but here men are not riding on horses nor do they show any battle-axe in their hands. Hence these drawing are earlier than the battle-axe horse-riders. However, we do find some stūpas intermixed here and there. One Kharoshṭhī inscription reads *Śivaputras*, i.e. "Of Śivaputra". There is another Kharoshṭhī inscription reading *Budharakshitasa*, *i.e.* "Of Budharakshita". There are several late symbols. One of them probably represents the sun.

**Southern face of the Rock**

As we come up from the river side towards the south, we come to an entirely new drawings. Here all the inscriptions are in late Brāhmī character. The stūpa drawings are late. Some of them are very complicated showing different compartments within the structural form. The men have different complexion, different dress and different weapons. Even some symbols are very complicated. Some new structures are also seen. Obviously these figural representations are latest in the series at Chilas II and are comparable with the drawings at Chilas III (see chapter VI). They speak of a period when late Brāhmī script was already introduced in the 6th-7th century A.D. Some of them are certainly even later.

(i) First we get two line inscription. The letters of the lower

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No. 99. Chilas II : a hunting scene.

No. 100. Chilas II : solar symbol and a late structure.

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line show the same form. It reads :

*Namo*

*(De)va dharmoyaṃ* i.e. "Salutation. This is the divine *dharma*."

(ii) Then come some horses and horse riders. And finally a stūpa on a terrace with a floreate vase on its either side. This type of representation shows a later taste. By its side is a votive stūpa in outline.

(iii) On the top right again three late stūpas, a horse, a horse rider and a human are engraved.

(iv) More stūpas or temples of the late period are seen on the top. A late Brāhmī inscription reads :

*Devadharmoyaṃ*
*(Dharma) dasasya*

i.e. "This (is) the divine *dharma*.

(Establishment) of (Dharma) dāsa."

(v) Another Brāhmī inscription (no. 96) has a beautiful calligraphic ending in imitation of a horn. It reads :

*Oṃ, Devadharmoyaṃ*
*Dharmoṭasya,*

i.e. "Oṃ. This (is) the divine *dharma* of Dharmoṭa."

(vi) After some late structures, we come to a fighting scene (no. 97), typical of this period. There are three persons in the picture. Two on the left are putting on the same long dress and are armed with sword and shield. On the right the man, whose male organ is shown, is having only arrow and bow. Apparently the last man belongs to a different racial stock. The persons on the left are certainly new invaders. There are three names in late Brāhmī. The top man is named on the right as *Subhaṭa*, literally meaning "the best warrior". The lower left person is named *Rodha*, literally meaning "obstruction". i.e. probably "one who obstructs". The man on the right is named *Kāṇa*, meaning 'one-eyed (person)."

(vii) Still to the south we see an ibex standing before a new kind of structure (no. 98) that is sub-divided by lines in the middle, each

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No. 101. Chilas IIa : a horse and an inscription.

No. 102. Chilas IIa : a boulder with late carvings.

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subdivision having dots. On the top flames are seen. Could this be a fire temple ?

(viii) Then we come to a hunting scene (no. 99) in which three persons are attacking an ibex. The front man is having an arrow and bow but the other two persons are armed with battle-axe and cross-bow. One of them is riding a horse.

(ix) More horsemen and battle-axe are seen on the south. As we climb up, we see an elaborate circle motif (no. 100), the like of which is also seen in Chilas III. It is probably a solar symbol. There are also two horsemen but one of them is defacing a Brāhmī inscription reading *Vasudatena*, i.e. "By Vasudatta." This Vasudatta is obviously the same man who has inscribed his name in the western face of the rock (see above). The horsemen are also later than the symbolic stūpa with flying banners, drawn in the same style as the earlier building, suggested as fire temple. This structure may not be a stūpa. It may represent a temple. They must have been done by the same hand.

(x) Still to the right we have a battle-axe and a late structure with the inscription reading :

*Devadharmoyaṃ Chaṭaśūlasya*

*i* e. "This (is) the divine *dharma*. (Establishment) of Chaṭaśūla."

(xi) We have several other late structures (stūpas ?) appearing like a bottle, circles with cross within, a circle having radiating curves within, a late stūpa with late Brāhmī writing :

*Śuśuṇḍasya*, i.e. "Of Śuśuṇḍa.".

Lastly unrecognisable round forms of writing obviously late copies by illiterate people. Such structures, symbols and forms have been described in detail in chapter VI.

## Odd Rocks at Chillas IIa

These big boulders are scattered on a higher terrace between KKH and the Indus river, not far from the municipal barrier. Some of them are carved and inscribed. They all belong to late period when Brāhmī writing was in vogue.

(i) The first boulder (no. 101) shows a jumping horse drawn in outline, with two bushy tails and tuft of hair on the head. The inscription in late Brāhmī on top reads :

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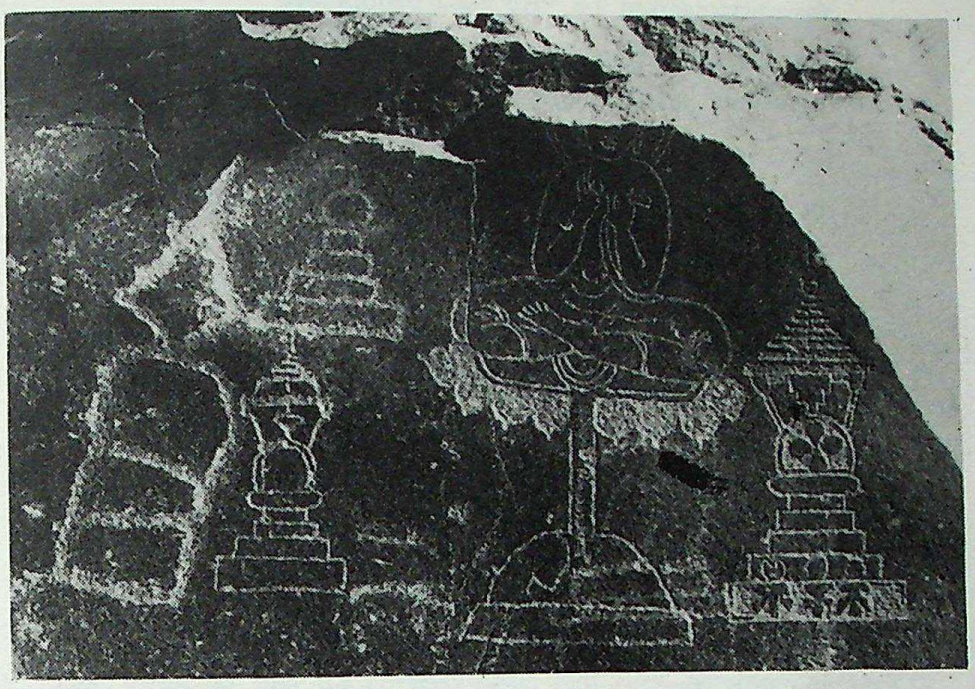
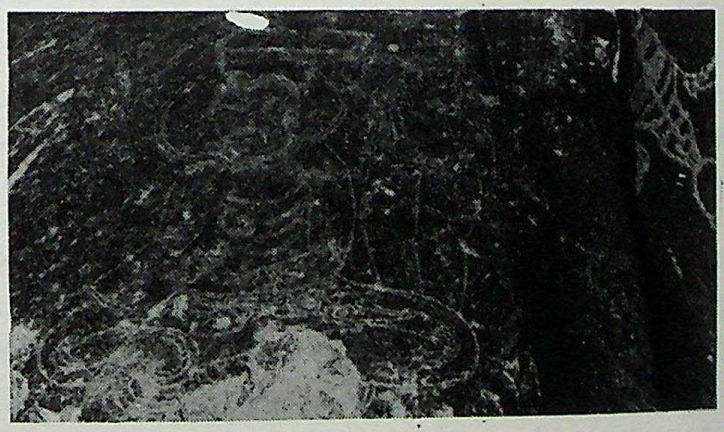


No. 103. Thalpan I : preaching Buddha.



No. 104. Thalpan I : Buddha and Vajrapāṇi

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*Vasuchandradevena*, i.e. "By Vasuchandradeva"

(ii) A second boulder to the south has several circle drawings mounted horsemen, late structures, and late Brāhmī inscriptions :

(a) On the left *Simha(sya)*, i.e. "Of Siṃha(deva)."

(b) A second inscription, partly defaced, is of historical character. Some portions read :

*Namo Śailendra-rājāya tasya*

*putrāya Lavikāya*

i e. "Salutation to (the king) Śailendrarājā and his son Lavika".

(c) On the right *Dha(r) madāsasya*. i.e. "Of Dharmadāsa."

(iii) As we proceed on the jeepable road, which is really not so good for jeep, after a bend, we see another big boulder below the pathway, This boulder is nearly eight feet high. It has carvings only on one face, showing humans, structures and other symbols. There are no inscriptions at all here. The figures are engraved in single line depiction.

Predominantly the carvings (no. 102) show late crude structures, resembling stūpas, spoked wheels with dots within squares with divisions within and sometimes with dots, probably representing solar symbol, horse-riders. Some horses are beautifully shown with their body solid-filled. Men are armed with arrows, bows and swords tied at the waist, hunting an ibex. Some of them are crossing swords. The ibexes are drawn few and far between. The animals and men are all engraved very crudely except one beautifully drawn horse. There is a lively fighting scene, in which two fat-bodied soldiers, with swords and shield, are battling with a man armed with arrow and bow.

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# CHAPTER V

## BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS IN ROCK ART

The Buddhist art that developed in the rock carvings of the later period is completely different from that seen in Chilas II. It seems that there was a gap between the earlier carvings of 1st century B.C. to 3rd century A.D. and these later Buddhist works which did not start before fifth century A.D. This is attested not only by the art forms but also by the palaeography of the inscriptions that accompany them. The later development can not be derived from the earlier forms of Chilas II. The two show hardly any connection except that the theme of both of them is the same Buddhistic representation. In fact the site of Chilas II, which lies so near the Indus river, was given up, and two other sites, at a higher level, at Chilas I and Thalpan were chosen for the production of the new art. It is quite possible that the Indus water level rose up in the meanwhile and drowned the northern side of Chilas II and hence the later comers used only its southern face. The earlier art of the northern face was hardly known to the artists who worked at Chilas I and Thalpan.

However, the source of both of them is the same *i.e.* the region of Gandhāra. In the case of the earlier art this is proved by the accompanying Kharoshthī inscriptions as well as by the forms of the stūpas. But it must be noted that the sculptural forms, which developed in the Kushāṇa period, do not find expression in the Rock Art of Chilas at all although some Kushāna period Kharoshthī inscriptions have been found here. A

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few deities that are represented at Chilas II show hardly any connection with the Kushāṇa art. These deities appear to have their independent origin in the Scythian period on the basis of local conception although iconography is common with the general tendencies in South Asia. When we come to the later Buddhist art of Chilas I and Thalpan, the first group does not have inscriptions at all. In the second group the accompanying inscriptions show the late Brāhmī forms of sixth century A. D. which were just transforming into late Brāhmī character of 7th-8th century A.D. This alphabet survived even later and we have not yet found here any inscription in pure Śāradā character that developed in Gandhāra in the Hindu Shāhī period and in Kashmir it continued right into the early Muslim time. However, the first group of carvings, which start from fifth century A.D., show greater links with Gandhāra forms. In fact the Gandhara tradition was re-established for a span of nearly three centuries when this new Buddhist art came into existence. The art forms, as seen at this time, continued the artistic trends of Gandhāra that developed in the post-Kushāṇa period. It seems that the loss of patronage during the time of the Huns in Gandhāra persuaded some artists to find new home in this part, and they perhaps managed to create these late forms in the Rock Art of Chilas. Thus the later Buddhist art of Chilas has preserved for us the late Buddhistic artistic trends that are not known today from Gandhāra. This Buddhist art of Chilas presents to us the great Buddhist art treasures of Pakistan belonging to 5th-8th centuries A.D. It contains the new Buddhist tendencies and developments that were preferred in this region.

The subject matter is limited. The *Jātaka* scenes are only three : one is labelled in the inscription as

*Vyāghrāṇi Dharma Nyāya*

literally meaning "principle of duty to tigers" but described hereafter as "Tiger legend". The second is the *Śibi Jātaka* engraved at Thalpan II, and the third, at the same site, is the scene of "Ascetic and the animals". Here the narrative form, as seen in the early Indian art of Sāñchī and Bhārhut, is absent and so do we miss here the Gandhāran style of story representation as seen in the different plaques there. However, we have got here the scene of temptation of the Buddha by Māra's daughters, the first sermon of Sārnāth and also Buddha's meditation under a *Śāla* tree.

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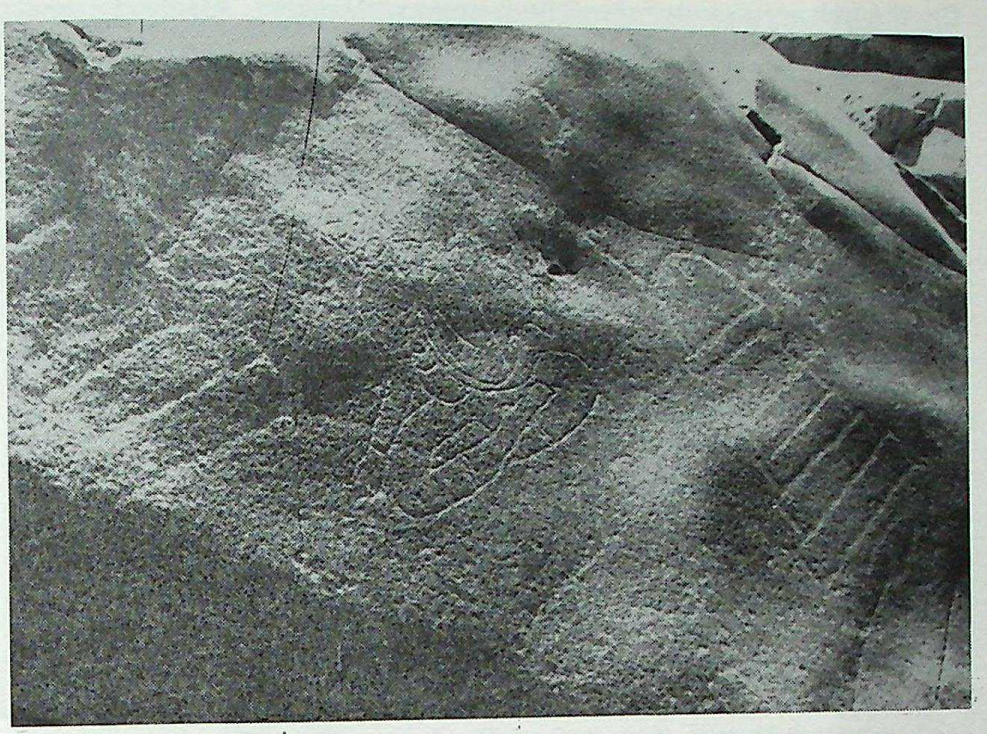

No. 105. Thalpan I : Buddha in *varada* pose.

No. 106. Thalpan I : *Māra* scene.

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On the other hand the three Bodhisattvas, Maitreya, Mañju Śrī and Avalokiteśvara, receive greater prominence and their manner of representation speaks of a form of Buddhism which had not been affected by the Tantric developments as seen in India. One scene is remarkable in which Avalokiteśvara and Mañju Śrī hold discussion. Another figure of Avalokiteśvara finds a place on the top but Buddha, without halo, and Maitreya are seen at the bottom left. Such a prominence given to Avalokiteśvara here points to a special cult associated with him. On another rock at Thalpan III we get the following creed recorded in the late Brāhmī character ;

Line 1 *Namo Rakshatrāya Namo*
Line 2 *Āryāvalokiteśvarāya Bo-*
Line 3 *Dhisat(t)vāya Mahāsat(t)vāya Mahākaru*
Line 4 *Ṇakāya Mahā Trātāra-Bhuvane-*
Line 5 *Ka-Śreshṭhāya*

"Salutation to the preserver. Salutation to Ārya Avalokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva, the great being, the most kind, the great protector, the one best in the world."

This new creed of Avalokiteśvara gave him a unique place among his followers. But this cult of the Bodhisattva had not remained untarnished. Even in this development schism had started.

Having derived the iconographic forms from Gandhāra the artistic tendency maintained its individualism. Besides the Gandhāran type, the later figures show forms comparable with those seen in the paintings of Sinkiang, discovered by Sir Aurel Stein. These later forms have no connection at all with the Tibetan style or with the sculptures seen at Gilgit (Kargāh Buddha) or with the Buddhas at Satparā lake in Skardu (Baltistan). The eastern tendency is imprinted in the round facial expression, with hardly any noticeable sign for the chin, and in the slant eyes seen in almost all the figures. The presence of two Chinese inscriptions and two horses of T'ang type in Chilas, and a total absence of Tibetan inscriptions, point the direction of contact that was maintained at this time. In fact similar Mongolian facial expression is also seen in some of the late Gandhāran Buddhas preserved now in the Peshawar Museum. It is thus fairly well attested that the way of contact with China was prepared at this time, and it is this way which encouraged the

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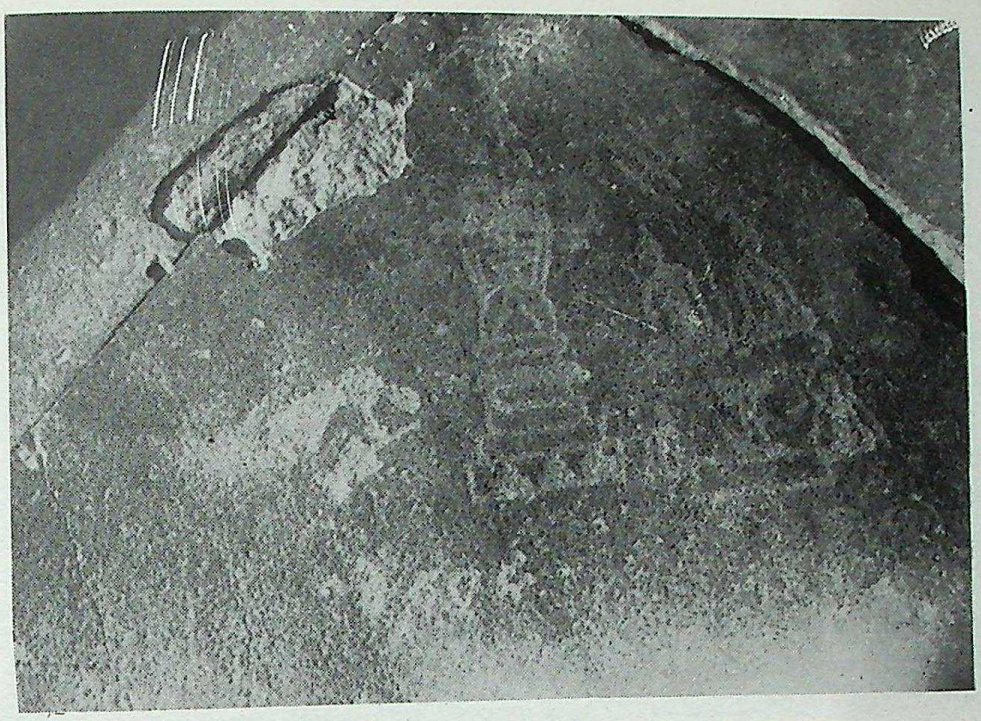

No. 107. Thalpan I : Five monks before a stūpa.

No. 108. Thalpan III : Buddha in meditation pose.

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Chinese pilgrims to follow this route towards Gandhāra, the Second Home of Buddhism.

However, the first group maintains its relation with Gandhāra in borrowing the long face of the human figures and also in the style of the garments. In the second group the same source provides the style of the upper and lower garments worn by the Buddha and some of the Bodhisattvas. They show the new developments in the Gandhāra style, in which the folds of the garments had grown into semi-circular lines, its one end falling in semi-circular loops over the crossed legs and feet and also front seat in a fashion that concealed them completely. The main body was hidden behind these folds which covered both the shoulders-a tendency which became the hall-mark of the late art of Swat and Dir, as noted in the greenish schist material. On the other hand in these examples the hair on the head is rarely shown. The *ushṇīsha* (top knot) took the simplified version of a semi-circle or a circle. The most important development in these examples is the form of the halo, which is no longer confined to the head alone. It now makes a trefoil arch, the upper curve enclosing the head and the two lower curves covering the body. The preference for the parallel lines makes the curvature of the arms follow that of the trefoil arch. The other tendency is to show the trefoil arch either flamed or have a series of golden plates decorating its interior. This style is common with the metal forms of Buddhist sculptures known from Kashmir. A third tendency is noticeable in some of the Buddha figures of the first group. They show a few parallel lines of Gandhāran garments but the body has apparently diaphanous dress with the result that the contour of the body is clearly observable. In the case of the seated figures the legs, the feet and the sole of the feet are shown in a manner that speaks of the post-Gupta influence in this region. Such an influence could easily have come from Punjab through Kashmir, wherefrom the alphabet showing triangular headmarks, as seen in the inscriptions at Thalpan bridge, also came in the fifth century A.D. Some of the Bodhisattvas at Chilas I show different style. In the case of the standing Vajrapāṇi (no. 104) at Thalpan I the plumpy figure puts on a short and takes an upper garment loosely thrown over the body with its hem showing western classical folds. In the case of the standing Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya at Chilas I the under-garment does not show the Indian *dhotī* style but has a style of wearing the striped cloth that appears like the Panjabi *lungī*. It conceals both the legs, and only feet are shown

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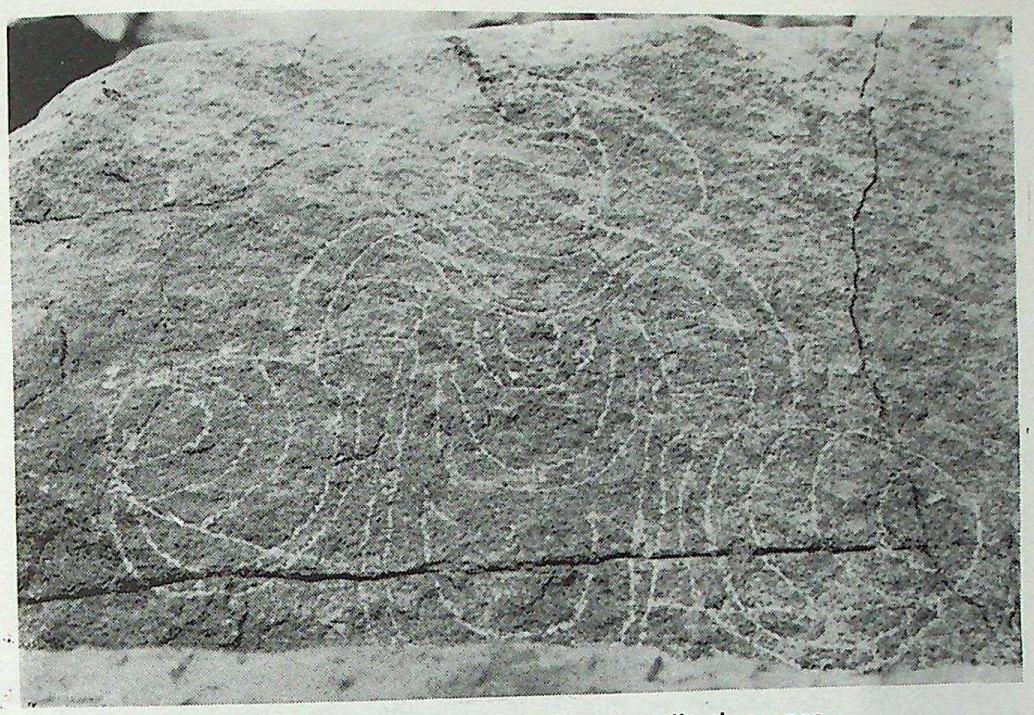

No. 109: Thalpan III : Buddha in meditation pose.

No. 110. Thalpan II : Buddha seated within a stūpa.

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below the garment. This new style of wearing the decorated garment differs from the Gandhāran type. Similarly the upper garment is noticeable only from the knot tied at the lower left end. The type of the crown, with triple risers in front, may point to the form of *triratna* (three jewels of Buddhism). This style of dress is seen in the metal form of Kashmir.

When we compare these features to the forms of the three devotees seen at this time, the variety in human representation is clearly marked. This variety speaks of different cultural influences that were exerting here. The devotee at Chilas I (no. 121) most probably figures the king himself, whose name is given in the inscription as *Siṃhadeva*. His long face, sharp nose and pointed chin stood in clear contrast to the figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas. His long hair overhead, combed back to the shoulder and tied with a fillet around the head, speaks of the royal demeanour. The dress is diaphanous and one end in front shows a triangular shape, behind which the legs are clearly visible. The type of the lamp with triangular arrow type of the handle and pedestalled bowl shows the type known at this time. On the other hand the second devotee (no. 124), on the high rock at Chilas I, puts on different garment and shows the same sharp nose and pointed chin but does not have the golden fillet round the head. He is named as PRIYAŚŪRA. The third figure (plate 10) from Ziārat site puts on a tight fitting Central Asian dress, which is decorated with four-petalled flowers. His body tapers down to the waist, has a sharp nose, a beard, his hair tied with a fillet falling back. His pose is also different from that of the other two figures as he has raised his body slightly upward while in the other two examples the body is bent forward. As he is putting on a sword at his waist, he appears to be a prince. He is named PRIYACHANDRA-PUTRA DHARMASIṂHA. Although the name is of Buddhist style, his physical form reproduces the type known in the paintings of Samarqand. A fourth figure (no. 33) is putting on a loose baggy trouser and a long coat with pointed corners, holds a curved sword in hand, has a high neck and bears a robust face, moustached and has a sharp nose. He stands by the side of an incense burner on a stand. There is another poor imitation of the figure seen in plate 10. All these three are clearly in Central Asian dress and type. They are found in the site of Ziārat.

## FIRST GROUP

This group of the carved figures is seen at Thalpan I, which from the

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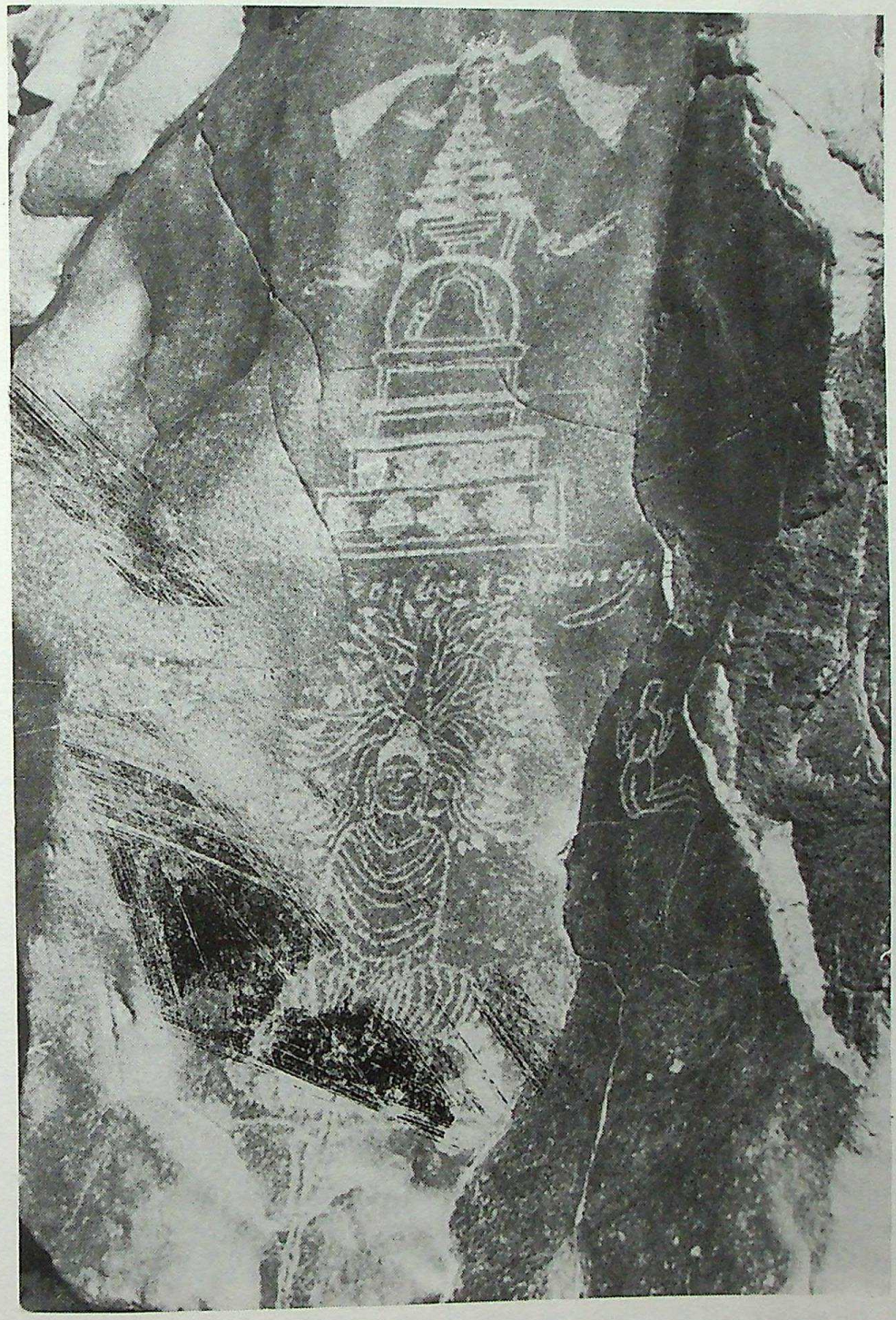

No. 111. Thalpan III : stūpa and seated Buddha.

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fact of the "First Sermon" represented there may be called "The Hillock of the First Sermon"

No. 103. This is a figure of the Buddha in preaching pose, seated on a lotus seat, raised high on a column resting on a double base. The base has a rectangular lower part on which rests an oval part. It is on the latter that the column is principally based. The seat has its lotus petals turned down. There are three semi-circular curves below the legs and over the seat representing the folds of the garment. Similar three semi-circular parallel curves are seen between the elbows and the feet. One double curve is also across each calf indicating the folds. Leaving these indications the body clearly shows its physical contour, which expresses smooth round forms. However, the figure is not nude as the folds of the garment, noted above, prove. It seems that the garment over the body is diaphanous and the folds show just the gatherings of the dress. It is such a representation which suggests Gupta infuence. The Buddha is seated cross-legged with the soles of the feet upward. The left foot alongwith the toes are clearly shown while the right one is pressed inside. His hands are doubled up and are at the chest with the fingers, one interposed with the other, in preaching pose. The arms gently curve down. The head, alongwith the surrounding halo, is partly broken. The face is slightly longish recalling the Gandhāran type of the post-Kushāṇa period. The halo, which is double-lined, encloses only the head. On ground of style it may be dated to 5th century A.D.

A stūpa erected on the right is contemporary with the Buddha. It is standing on five receding terraces, above which is a single semi-circular moulded base which supports the dome. The drum has been done away with in this type. The lowest terrace has four-petalled flowers, the next has three circles and the remainder are plain. The dome which encloses a four-petalled flower, supports a stepped *harmikā* (relic chamber) and holds struts, represented by double inclines, on its either top end, which are meant to prop the *chhatrāvali* (series of umbrellas)". which consists of seven pieces, represented by seven horizontal lines, each receding upward in a fashion that the whole gives the appearance of a triangular cone. The finial consists of two circles, one on the top of the other, and ends in a plain spike.

On the left bottom there is another smaller version of this stūpa, erected in imitation of the first. In this case there are only four receding

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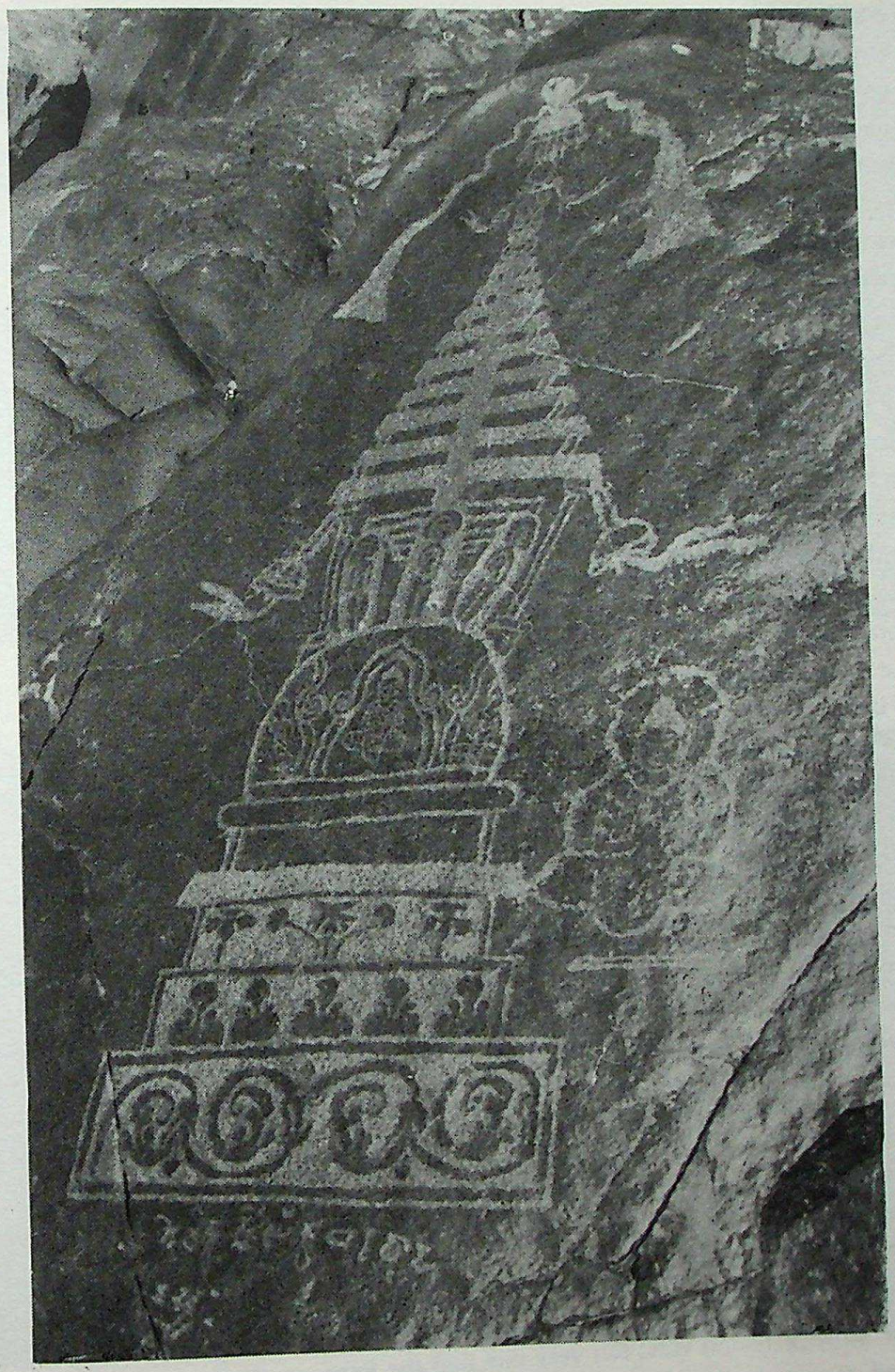

No. 112. Thalpan III : Buddha by the side of a stūpa.

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terraces, which are all plain. The three-fourth circular dome, which rests on a moulded base, has a double line and is all plain. A crude *harmikā* (relic chamber) is over it, with struts on the dome supporting the crudely carved *chhatrāvali* (series of umbrellas), having a spike upon them. [On the top of this stūpa there is another structure of a still later date, carved in outline. Still later a structure was scratched over the stand of the Buddha's seat in a shallow manner. Of a much later date we see, to the left of the two stūpas, a temple construction, consisting of a poor dome resting on two carelessly drawn terraces but having a spiked spire over the dome.

No. 104. This is a similar type of the seated Buddha in an earth-touching pose with Vajrapāṇi standing by his side holding a *vajra* (thunderbolt) over his head. The presentation here may represent a part of the life story of the Buddha, in which Vajrapāṇi gives protection to his life against all evil dangers. The lower part of the figure at the feet and the seat is chipped away. The Buddha is seated cross-legged, with his left hand on the lap and the right hand over the right knee in the *Bhūmi-sparśa mudrā* (earth-touching pose). Four double curves, parallel to one another, represent the folds of the upper garment over the body. Another double line around the neck indicates the covering of both the shoulders. Similar folds are also seen on the arms. Over the legs the stylistic folds end in classical pleats, recalling the style of Gandhāra. The face is longish in the Gandhāran manner but the eyes are slant. The head shows the hair represented by pecked marks, with small *ushṇīsha* (top knot) overhead. The halo, which starts from the shoulders is double lined and is only around the head. Although the garment folds are indicated yet the body, as in the earlier example, shows its contour suggesting that the dress is diaphanous. The Buddha is seated on a double petalled lotus seat, which is again raised on a pedestal, now very faint.

The bulky figure of Vajrapāṇi puts on a short and an upper drapery hung over the body, with its hem again indicating the western classical pleats. His left hand is at the chest, holding probably the handle, and the right hand bent up to support the rectangular *vajra* (thunderbolt). His eyes are wide open and hair is combed up.

No. 105. This is on a smaller boulder to the east of the main rock on a surface facing west but very dim and the lines are shallow. It is a seated figure of the Buddha on a lotus seat. The legs are crossed and

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No. 113. Thalpan II : stūpas, Buddha, Maitreya and Śibi Jātaka.

No. 114. Thalpan II : Avalokiteśvara and Mañju Śrī.

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the soles of the feet are visible. The left hand appears to be doubled up and is holding the garment and the right is in the *varada* (donation) pose over the right knee. The face is longish but the eyes are slant and the ears distented. The hair is shown by pecked marks on the head, which is topped by a small *ushnīsha* (top knot). Faint lines of halo are visible round the head. Similar faint lines, representing the folds of garment, are seen on the body, hands and legs.

To his right and left are two later structures with faint inscription underneath the right one in late Brāhmī character.

No. 106. This is on another low boulder on a surface facing north to the west of no. 3. It shows the *Māra* scene with the Buddha in the middle, two daughters of *Māra* (god of love) on his either side, and *Māra* himself standing on the right. The whole engraving is very shallow and very dim. The Buddha is seated on a seat made of *Dūba* grass in a cross-legged fashion with his left hand on the lap hidden behind the garment and the right hand on the right knee with the fingres touching the earth in the *bhūmi-sparśa mudrā* (earth-touching pose). The upper garment falls in folds at an incline from the left shoulder to the right arm pit, leaving the right shoulder bare. The face is rather longish but the eyes are slant, ears are distented. Small *ushṇīsha* (top knot) is on the head, which has hair marked by pecking. *Māra's* daughters, who are nude except for the girdle at the waist, are in *tribhaṅga* (thrice bent body) pose with hands overhead and standing on their toes in a dancing pose. *Māra* himself, on the extreme right, is now very dim. This may be dated in the fifth century A.D.

Plate 6. The scene of the First Sermon shows the Buddha seated in the middle with two disciples seated on his right and three on his left. Below him is the *Dharma-chakra* (wheel of law) on a column, flanked by a seated deer. This is on the north-western face of the main hillock. This scene is on the right top and below at a lower level there is one head above a stūpa.

(i) The head makes almost full circle, with the nose and mouth just indicated. The eyes are long and slant protected by eye-brows joined in the middle. Below this head is a new type of structure, standing on six receding tiers and a moulded base supporting three-fourth circle dome in double line enclosing a trefoil arch. The dome has on its top a small *harmikā* (relic chamber) but over it, in place of the umbrella, we

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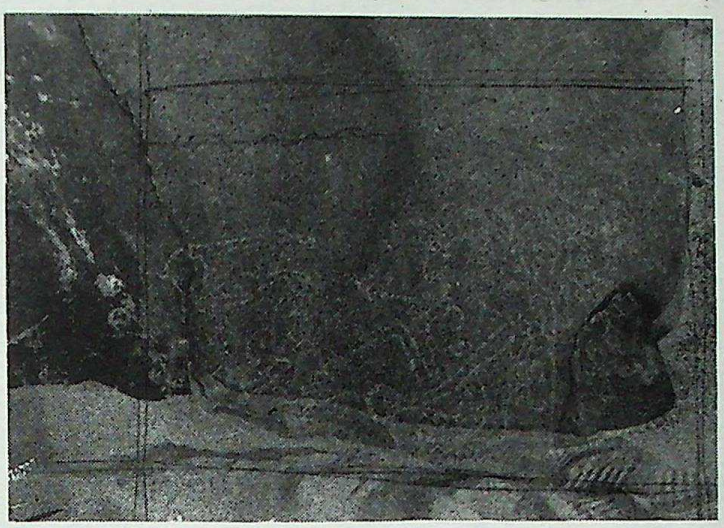

No. 115. Thalpan II : a Jātaka story.

No. 116. Thalpan II : Buddhas and a monastery.

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have a floral vase or an urn. It is difficult to say whether it is a stūpa or not. To the right is another structure erected slightly later, built on five terraces, a dome, a *harmikā*, props for the umbrellas, which make a triangular shape.

(ii) The main scene above has the *dharma chakra* (Wheel of Law) with radiating lines within. It is supported on a column resting on a rectangular base. On its either side is a seated deer, drawn in outline, with the mouth and eyes turned towards the Buddha and horns twisted back.

The Buddha is seated on bare ground, cross-legged, in the preaching pose. The parallel folds of the garment cover the entire body and the legs. The additional semi-circular folds in parallel curves hide the feet and fall below the legs - a style of later period. The face is slightly longish but the eyes are slant, mouth small and nose broad. The *ushṇīsha* (top knot) is seen over hairy head, which is surrounded by a simple halo. The disciples, whose bodies are shown solid, are in the *dhyāni mudrā* (meditating pose). The carving may be dated to the beginning of the sixth century A.D.

No. 107. On a separate rock to the south of the main hillock, on its top surface facing north-east, we have a representation of a tree beside a stūpa. Underneath the tree five disciples are seated, two in the ascetic dress, with their bodies filled solid but they have, on their, heads, prolably matted hair tied up. They may be the five disciples of the Buddha, who deserted him when he decided to give up the path of asceticism and follow another way to the highest knowledge. To the left of the stūpa there is a man standing, bent on pounding a long pestle in the pedestalled holder, probably grinding corns. Below is a short inscritption in the late Brāhmī of 6th century A.D. Its first few letters read :

*Oṃ deva Dharmo (yaṃ)*
"Oṃ, this divine dharma ....."

The stūpa rests on four receding terraces, the lowest of which is decorated with stepped motif. Then come three moulded bases of three different types, supporting a three-fourth circle dome, enclosing a trefoil arch. On it is a *harmikā* (relic chamber), with props supporting the umbrellas, represented by thick bands. The finial consists of a crescent and a parasol with hanging banners.

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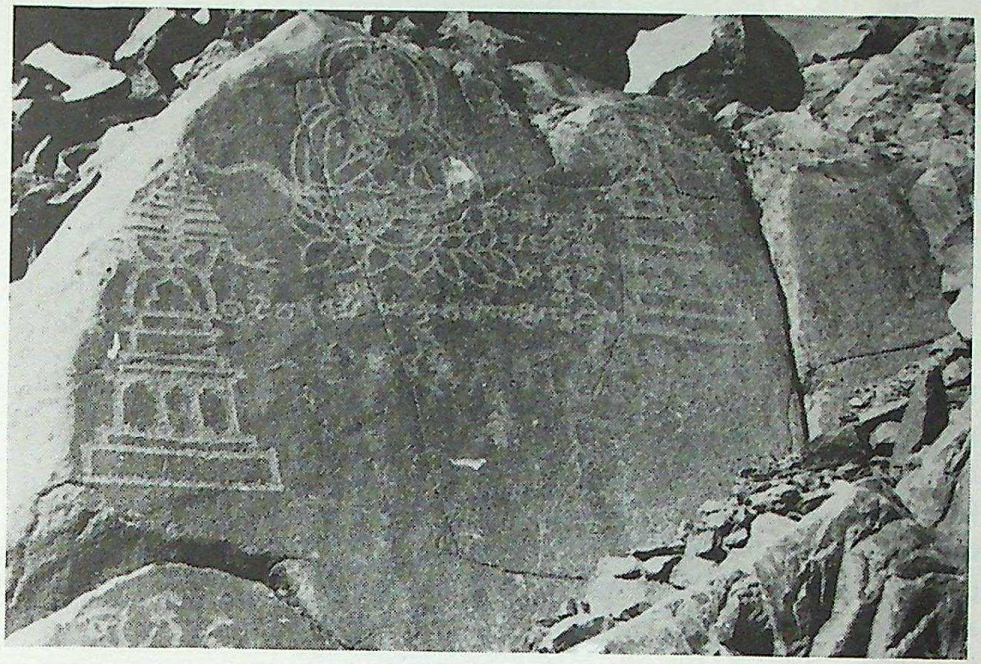

No. 117. Chilas I : Mañju Śrī and stūpa

No. 118. Chilas I : Mañju Śrī.

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No. 108. This figure is engraved on the high hill along the pilgrim path some distance away to the north at Thalpan III. A little further up is a drawing of a stūpa. The Buddha is seated here on a plain double terraced seat in meditation pose with the garments covering both the shoulders, the body and the legs. The style of depicting the garments is typically Gandhāran, in which the folds fall in semi-circular curves. Three of them are seen on the body and the fourth falls down to hide the feet and part of the seat in a peculiar style of its own. The prominent knees also show folds over them, giving a concept of triple falls over the legs - a style which developed into a petrified style, as will be shown in the examples at Thalpan II. The face of the Buddha is still longish with circular *ushṇīsha* (top knot) overhead. The halo round the head is plain and double-lined and it starts from the shoulder but its outer line is extended down parallel to the curve of the arms, suggesting that its origin probably lies in the trefoil type of the halo seen at Chilas I (see below). However, the trefoil form is not so explicit in the present example and hence this figure should be directly derived from Gandhāra and may be placed in the mid-sixth century A.D.

No. 109. At the same place on a lower level there is another similar figure of the seated Buddha in the same style but in the present example there is no seat at all shown although the Buddha is seated in meditation pose. In both the examples the body is heavy and the face is longish with eyes slant, In the present example the plain halo round the head is shown in a single line but makes a trefoil arch with the lower curves parallel to the arms. The dress of the Buddha falls in folds in the same fashion as in the earlier example. The semi-circular curves over the feet are lengthened. It seems that the figure is incomplete.

However, these two examples (for a third example see chapter VII) introduce a new type at Thalpan, which became a model for the later carvings at Thalpan II. It is possible that in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. the area of Thalpan maintained a school of Buddhism, in which the cult of the Buddha found a prominent place.

No. 111. This picture on the pilgrim route at Thalpan III shows another late development from the Gandhāran style. It shows the seated figure of the Buddha under a *Śāla* (or does it represent a *pipal* tree ?) tree with a stūpa above and a heavenly being flying down from right with a bowl of food in his left hand. The scene may represent the well-known story of the offer of food by the gods of the four quarters. The Buddha

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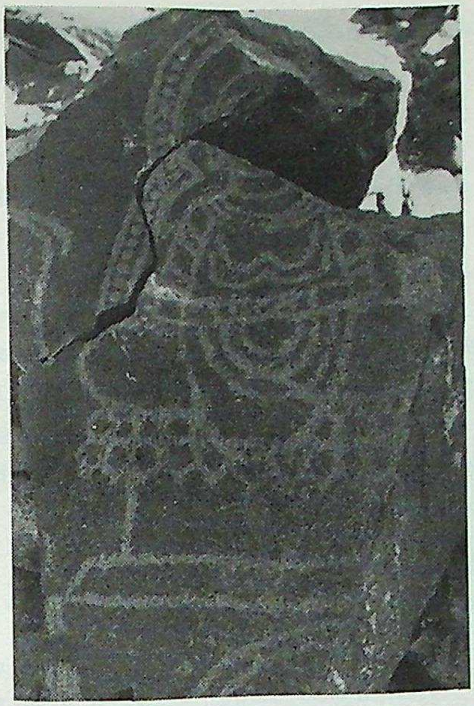

No. 119. Chilas I : Buddha (broken).

No. 120. Chilas I : A panel of Buddha and Bodhisattvas.

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is seated on a lotus seat raised high on a lotus stalk in meditation pose. The upper garment, which covers both the shoulders, falls in simple parallel curves in front and the lower garment covers the knees in parallel curves and falls in long loops over the feet just touching the lotus seat. The face is rounded with slant eyes and *ushṇīsha* (top knot) over the head. The hair is again shown by pecked marks. There is no separate halo round the head but the roots of the tree make a sort of a series of halo around the head probably suggesting that the tree of knowledge surrounds the head of the Buddha. The heavenly being on the right is drawn in outline, and he is holding a food vessel in his left hand and a flower in his right hand. The legs of the flying being is very gently bent. Over the tree there is an inscription in late Brāhmī character of the late 6th century A.D. It reads :

*Oṃ Devadharmoyam Rañchanavāhanasya*

"Oṃ. The divine dharma, this is of Ranchanavāhana."

The stūpa above is highly decorated and follows the style seen at Chilas I. In the present example the double terraced base is decorated. The lower terrace has four fretted cross while the upper terrace has columns standing on base and having capitals. The semi-circular dome encloses a trefoil arch. The *harmikā* (relic chamber) stands on a pedestal over the dome but there are no guards here. There are seven umbrellas above, shown by thickened bands and propped by struts. From the lower and upper ends of the umbrellas bells hang down. The umbrellas make a sharp triangle. The finial consists of crescent and circle, from either end of which a banner flies to right and left. It seems that the stūpa and the Buddha were engraved at the same time.

The donor Rañchana-vāhana may have come from the eastern region.

No. 112. This is another decorated stūpa on the pilgrim route at Thalpan III, with the figure of the seated Buddha inside the dome as well as on the outside. In the present example the base consists of three receding tiers, all of them decorated. The lowest one has scroll design, the second has overflowing vases on pillars and the third has a series of vases with overflowing leaves, a motif so well known in the post-Gupta period. Above this base is a thickened line supporting a short drum and a single moulding supporting a semi-circular dome, which encloses a trefoil arch in double line and struts on the sides with very poor figures of guards. Within the arch is the seated Buddha. Over the dome is an

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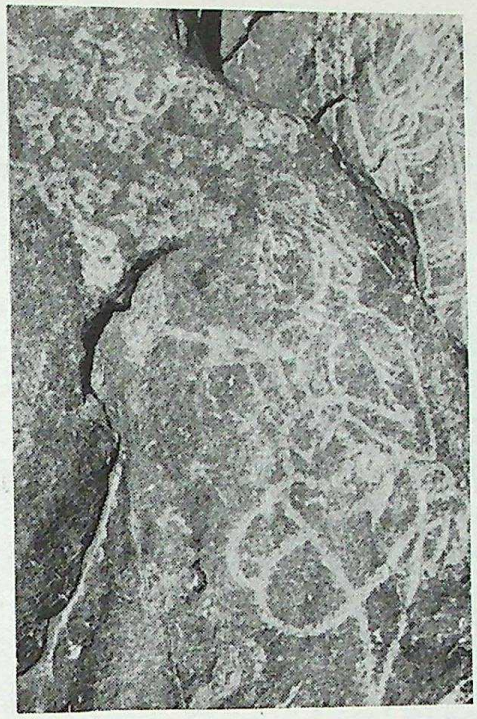

No. 121. Chilas I : King Siṃhadeva.

No. 122. Chilas I : Avalokiteśvara.

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elaborate *harmikā* (relic chamber), guarded by three guardsmen. And finally comes a series of nine umbrellas, with an elaborate finial ending in crescent and circle. Bells hang down from the lower ends of the umbrella and from the middle of the finial. Banners fly on either side below the crescent.

To the right of the stūpa the Buddha is seated in preaching pose with a halo round his head and body in trefoil shape, upper garment covering both the shoulders and falling in parallel curves, the central fall makes a semi-circle covering the feet. The face is rounded with the eyes slant, and *ushnīsha* (top knot) is seen over the hairy head. Below the stūpa there is a late Brāhmī inscription of seventh century A.D.

*Devadharmoyam Kuvaravāha (nasya)*
"The divine *dharma* is this of Kuvaravāhana."

The name Kuvaravāhana also occurs on the right side of the big stūpa on a rock along Karakorum Highway at Chilas I.

No. 110. This is a picture of unfinished stūpa from the top surface of a boulder where the Parthian soldiers are engraved ar Thalpan II. The stūpa is standing on three receding plain terraces with steps leading to the second terrace. Then follows a series of moulding including a short drum. The dome, which is semi-circular, encloses a trefoil arch with the Buddha seated in meditation pose inside. Above the dome a stepped *harmikā* (relic chamber) has just been outlined but the umbrellas could not be made. The whole stūpa appears to be incomplete. The type of the Buddha and particularly the folds of the garment are very instructive. The folds do not fall in parallel curves but the pleats at the neck make a triangular fold in the same fashion as is seen in the Buddha figures of the early Kushāṇa period But this impression is probably due to the unfinished nature of the figure. However, the presence of the *sopāna* (ladder) adds another feature of contact with Gandhāran model. This may be placed in the fifth century A.D.

Nos. 113-114. This group of carvings is at the same site as the previous figure at Thalpan II but on a separate rock to the west. A big boulder is divided into two parts by scoops and cracks in the middle. Both the parts have smoothed surface facing south towards the river. It is on this surface that several scenes are depicted. All of them may not have been done by the same hand and at the same time. The scene can be divided into three parts : the first two relate the *Jātaka* stories of the

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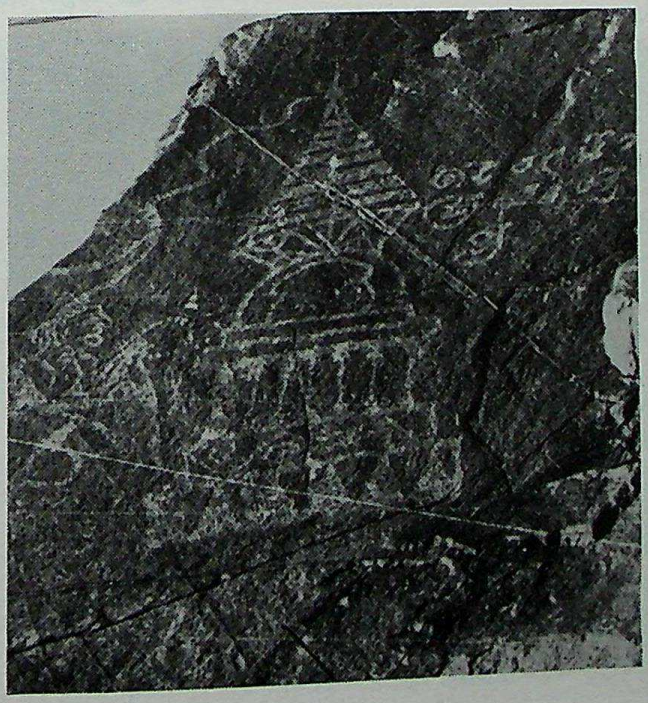
No. 123. Chilas I : seated Buddha.



No. 124. Chilas I : A worshipper before a stūpa.

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Buddha - the "Śibi Jātaka" and the "ascetic and the animals". The third is unique of its kind presenting a discussion between two Bodhisattvas, named Avalokiteśvara and Mañju Śrī, above a group of three stūpas, with Maitreya and the Buddha at the left bottom. On this side at three different places the inscription, either in full or in part, reads :

*Vicharati Devadata Sabodhapati*

"Devadatta, Lord of knowledge, spreads (or preaches)."

The verb "*vicharati*" has been used in several other inscriptions at Chilas. It appears to have a technical meaning different from the usual sense of "moves". It would be better to translate it by such words as "spreads" or "preaches". The name Devadatta may strike strange to Buddhist scholars as he is known to be a rival cousin of the Buddha. The title "*Sabodhapati*" gives great prominence to him and shows how he is invested with the lordship of knowledge.

No. 115 (i) : Starting first with the *Jātaka* stories, we can take up the scene on the extreme right side of the boulder carved at the bottom. Here an emaciated ascetic is seated under a tree, with his back resting against its trunk. He is seated on his doubled up legs, with his left hand on his knee, holding a beaded rosary. The right hand is raised up to front in the act of feeding the animals in his front. He is bearded and has on his head matted hair and is putting on an undergarment recognisable by the parallel curves of folds. Before him are eagerly sitting several animals—a goat at the bottom, two birds (probably crows) above the goat, next one a lion and on the top a boar. All the animals have forwarded their mouths towards the hand of the ascetic. In this portrayal it is not difficult to recognise a new *Jātaka* story of "ascetic and animals". In the form of the ascetic the Bodhisattva is making charity to the animal world represented by these animals.

(ii) The story of the Śibi Jātaka is engraved between the two right stūpas. The scene presents the king of the falcon sitting on the left and the Bodhisattva standing to front holding a balance in his hand. The seated king, who is putting on the Indian *dhoti* and has a crown on his head, is holding the dove in his left hand and receiving the flesh in his right. hand. The standing Bodhisattva is recognisable by the *ushṇīsha* (top knot), seen on his head. He has a rounded face and slant eyes. The balance is in his right hand, and with the left hand he is taking out flesh from his left thigh. The balance depicted here is typical

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No. 125. Chilas I : The story of "tiger legend".

No. 126. Chilas I : Body sacrifice of the Buddha.

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of the historical period. It has two large concave receptacles on two sides, tied with several strings to the rod which has a central string raiser. The manner in which the flesh is weighed and presented is absolutely novel. The calm and generous demeanour of the Bodhisattva stands in contrast to the greedy eyes of the falcon king. There was a label inscription above but it is now spoiled by the animal carvings of later period.

(iii) The central object of the main scene is the representation of the three stūpas on the lower side—all of them built at the same time and hence may represent the *triratna* ("three jewels") concept of *Buddha*, *dharma* and *saṅgha* (monastery). In the centre is the large stūpa with a crowning element consisting of a crescent with a circle (probably representing sun) within. Under them come two wheels, the upper one enclosing radiating curved lines and the lower one a simple cross. Little bells hang down from above them. This addition of wheels is a new element. Below are broad bands of seven umbrellas. From the lower umbrella again hang down little bells at the ends. Then follows below the rectangular *harmikā* (relic chamber) on a pedestal, guarded by two guardsmen, armed with long pointed spear. These guardsmen are also seen in the stūpa of the "Tiger Legend". They are standing on the top of the dome by the side of the double-lined struts that support the umbrellas which hang around a central *yashṭi* (handle). The dome is semi-circular and has at its underside top two semi-circular curves. The dome encloses a trefoil arch which contains a dim figure of probably Buddha in meditation pose. The seated figure has *ushṇīsha* (top knot) on his head. The dome rests on tripple mouldings, supported on a plinth, again resting on a broad solid base. This base stands on seven receding tiers The lowest one is broad and has only two scrolls engraved at its left side. The remaining surface is unfinished. Below this stūpa we have the first inscription of Devadatta.

The two other stūpas are smaller in size but follow the same type with differences in detail. Both of them do not have scroll at the lowest tier. The right-hand stūpa does not have an arch within the dome but the left hand one has the arch but without the Buddha. The guards at the *harmikā* (relic chamber) are also absent. The crowning element is the same. The left side stūpa has only one bell at the lowest umbrella. The inscription on the right side of the right stūpa reads simply :

VODHAPATI *i.e.* "Lord of knowledge".

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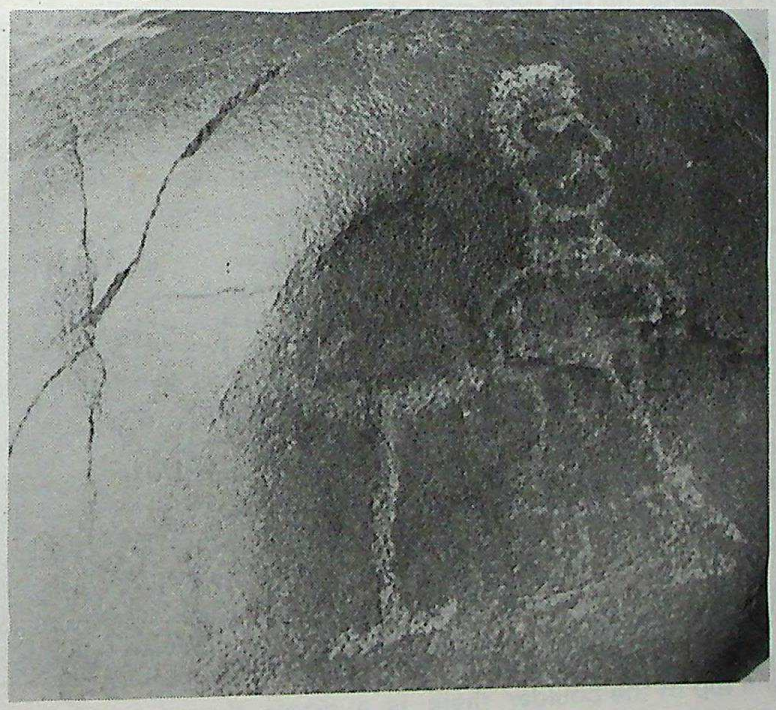
No. 127. Chilas I : Bodhisattva conversing with other *devas*.



No. 128. Chilas I : A Central Asian figure and an incense burner.

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At the bottom right of the left stūpa the inscription reads :

*Namo Bu(ddhāya)* *i.e.* "Salutation to Bu(ddha).

Much later three markhors were drawn on the right side of the right hand stūpa. The left side small stūpa has, on the left side, the seated figure of Maitreya and on the right the seated Buddha. While the inscription of Devadatta is to the bottom left of the figure of Maitreya, another inscription in two lines to his top left reads :

*Ārya Maitreya* "Ārya Maitreya, the Bodhisattva"
*Bodhisattva*

Maitreya is seated on a double-petalled lotus seat, cross-legged. The undergarment makes six parallel curves and hides the legs. The small waterpot is above the curves and is held in the bent right hand. The body is bare and slighlty squarish. The left hand is bent forward holding a beaded rosary. The face is shown in profile and hence its roundness is distorted. The head has three-pointed crown. Only the head has a simple halo in the form of a circle starting from the shoulder. This type of halo introduces a new variety different from the trefoil shape seen in the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in Chilas I.

The Buddha, on the right side of the small stūpa, is seated in meditation pose. The upper garment, which covers the body and both the shoulders, shows poorly drawn parallel curves, underneath which the contour of the body is clearly visible. The gentle curve of the arms, sharp bend at the elbow and one palm—all are explicitly shown. The folds of the lower garment fall in three loops over the seat—a style which is derived from the type in the case of the two other Buddhas in Thalpan III. The face makes a complete round with slant eyes, broad nose, small mouth and distented ears. On the head there is a small semi-circular *ushṇīsha* (top knot). But strangely enough there is no halo at all round the head. The inscription on the top reads :

*Śākyamuni Tathāgata* *i.e.* "Tathāgata (Buddha), the sage of the Śākya (tribe)".

Is this omission of the halo round Buddha's head deliberate? If it is so, it seems that here we have got a representation of the Devadatta School.

On the top of the boulder there is a single figure of seated Avalokiteśvara. Normally this place is occupied by the figure of the Buddha

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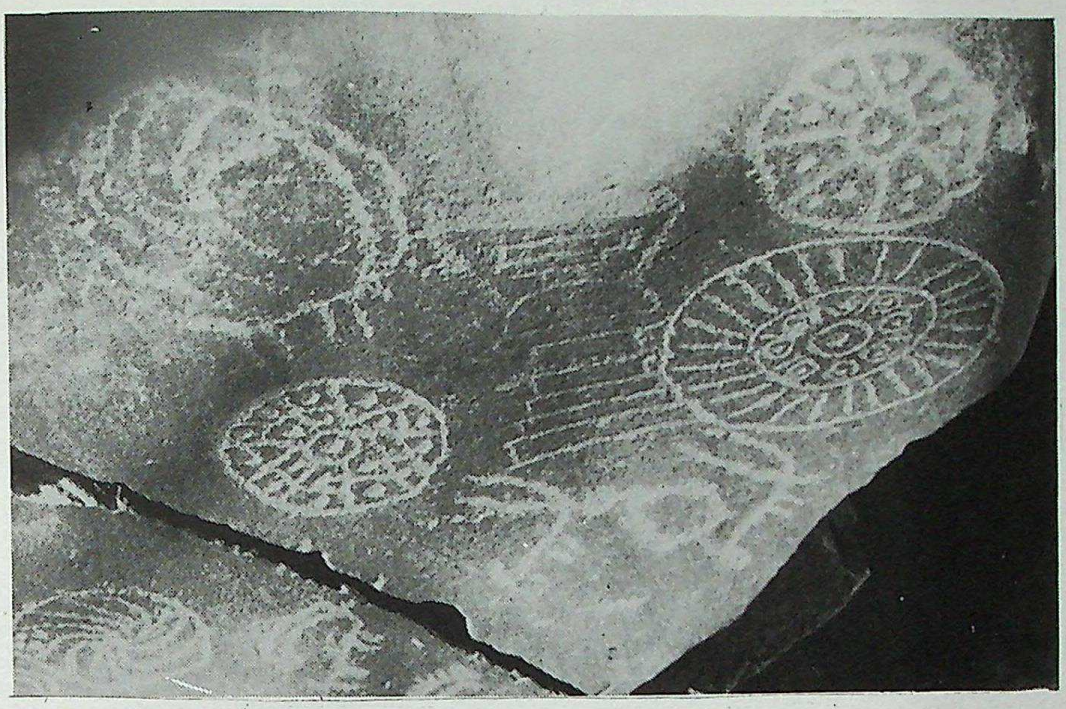

No. 129. Thalpan I : stūpa and circles.

No. 130. Thalpan I : stūpa, animals and circles.

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but in the present boulder the Buddha is relegated down and shown unhaloed while the top position is given to Avalokiteśvara. This seated figure is almost a repetition of the figure of Maitreya except that here it is shown in three-fourth profile and hence the round face and two eyes are clearly seen. But another exception is that the figure has *ushṇīsha* (top knot) on the head which is haloed, a simple halo starting from the shoulders. He is sitting on a double-petalled lotus seat, holds a lotus stalk in his left hand and a beaded rosary in his right hand. The inscription to the left reads :

ĀRYĀVALOKITEŚVARA BODHISATVA *i.e.* "Ārya Avalokiteśvara, the Bodhisattva".

Below this seated figure is the main portrayal, in which two seated persons have bent their heads forward in heated discussion. Both are distinguished clearly by their dress and iconographic attributes. In the present case no lotus seat is shown. But the undergarment of the left figure has a chequer design, concealing the legs. The body is bare, right hand in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose, left hand holding a lotus flower, beaded necklace at the neck, halo round the head, which has a top knot above and the hair falling over the shoulders. On the left there is an inscription reading.

AVALOKITEŚVARA

The right hand figure has his undergarment shown differently by parallel lines across the legs. His right hand is in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose and left hand on the lap probably holding a book. He has also round face as the first figure and has slant eyes. Over his head also there is the protrusion of the *ushṇīsha* (top knot), behind which fall the pleated hair over the shoulder. The inscription above his head reads:

MAÑJUŚRĪ BODHISATVA *i.e.* "Mañju Śrī, the Bodhisattva."

Such a disputation among the two Bodhisattvas appears to have arisen from the position that each one of them is seeking to establish for himself. In the present illustration Avalokiteśvara assumes the first place. Again the prominence given to Devadatta, with the simultaneous lower position accorded to Buddha, suggests the direction in which the local school of Buddhism had developed at this time. On the basis of palaeography and the style of art this carving should be

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No. 131. Thalpan I : stūpa, circles and man holding *triśūla* and battle-axe.

No. 132 Thalpan : stūpa and horse-riders.

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placed towards the close of the seventh or the beginning of the eighth century A.D.

The present illustration is very instructive as far as state of Buddhism had developed in this area. Further we will see how in the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. the carvings at Chilas I show the prominence given to Mañjuśrī. If we combine this information with that obtained from Hiuen Tsang, we come to the true picture. The Chinese pilgrim informs that Arhat Madhyāntika built the statute of Maitreya Bodhisattva at the capital of U-Chang-Na in Ta-li-lo (wrongly identified with Darel valley). It is also recorded that from that time "the streams of the law (religious teaching) began to flow eastward". It seems that this *Arhat* was responsible for the Bodhisattva cult in this region. The present illustration shows how schism had started even in this cult and Devadatta school gave prominence to Avalokiteśvara.

No. 116. On the eastern end of another boulder at Thalpan II a different scene is represented much later as the art style shows. It is on two faces of the rock at the bottom corner. On the right hand face there is a square structure in the middle with compartmented rooms on the inner side of the arms of the square and a domical structure in the middle. It appears to be a poor model of a Buddhist monastery. There are four Buddhas seated on its three sides. One is on the top, another on the left and two at the bottom. Similar four Buddhas are also on the other face but in place of the structure here we have the bigger carving of the Buddha himself, with the only difference that in the present example the Buddha is seated on a plain seat shown by double lines. The figures of the Buddha are repetitive and poorly drawn. He is shown in meditating pose. with his squarish body covered by simplified parallel lines, representing the upper garment over both the shoulders. The lower garment throws loops in parallel curves over the seat. The face is round with distented ears, *ushṇīsha* (top knot) over head and simple halo round the head only. A late Brāhmī inscription of early 8th century A.D. over the right scene reads :

NAMO BUDDHĀYA i.e. "Salutation to the Buddha."

This repetition of the Buddha figures in the same form may reflect the story of the thousand Buddhas. This is probably deliberately shown here to reassert his place in local Buddhism. But the place

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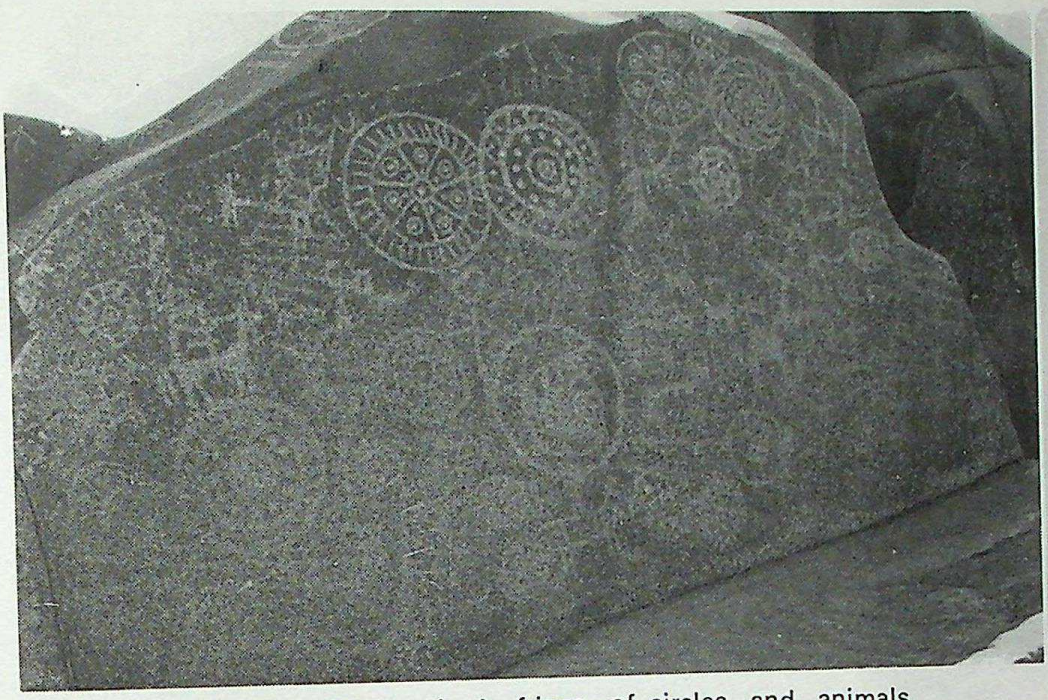
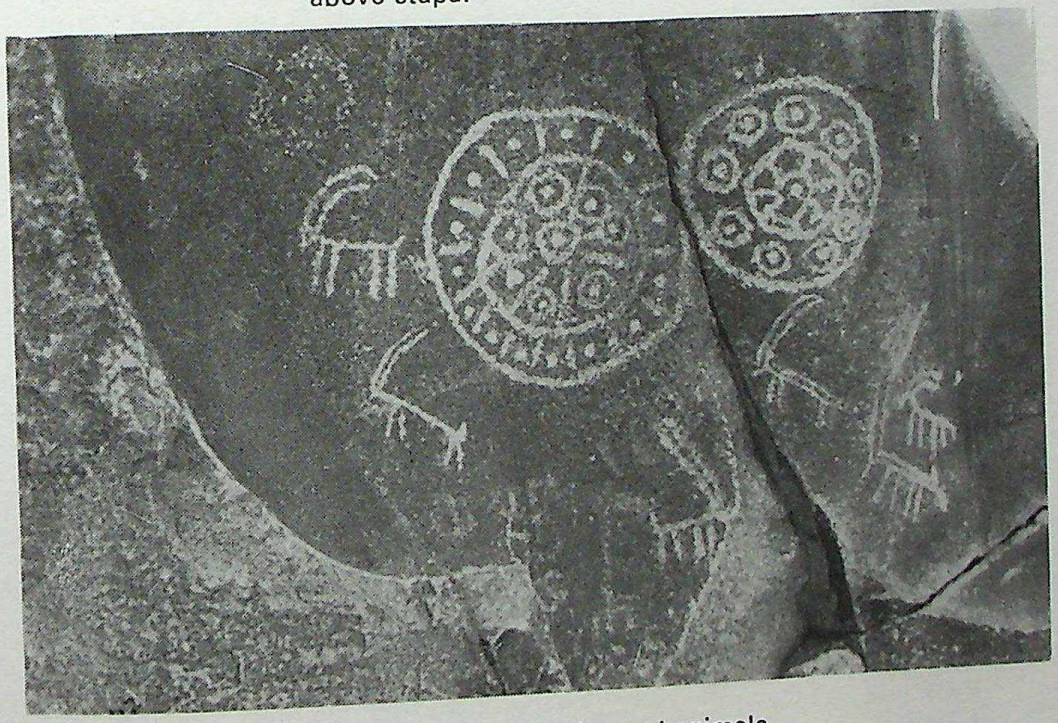


No. 133. Thalpan I : A frieze of circles and animals above stūpa.



No. 134. Circles and animals.

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given to this scene in one corner indicates that this school was perhaps in less favour in this part.

## SECOND GROUP

All these carvings are in Chilas I on either side of the Karakorum Highway (KKH) on a slope of a hill locally called Jayachand.

No. 117. This carving is between KKH and the river Indus on a boulder near the Thalpan bridge. It shows a seated figure of Mañju Śrī in the middle top and a stūpa on the right and another on the left. The last stūpa is of a later date. The right stūpa and Mañju Śrī are contemporary and were made by (the king) Siṃhadeva. Mañju Śrī is seated. cross-legged, on a lotus seat, with his left hand on the lap and the right hand at the chest in *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose. The fold of his garment falls in double parallel, semi-circular lines over the seat. His whole body is within a halo in the form of a trefoil arch, drawn in two parallel lines, in a fashion that the upper curve encloses the head and the lower foils cover the body. The arms, which have ornaments, are parallel to the lines of the trefoil arch, which is plain. The neck has a necklace. The face is rounded and has slant eyes. The ears have ear-ornaments. Over the head there is a three-pointed crown. To the left of the figure a three-line inscription in the 7th century A.D. Brāhmī records :

OṂ NAMO ĀRYA MAÑJU ŚRĪ BODHISATVĀYA

"Oṃ. Salutation to Ārya Mañju Śrī, the Bodhisattva."

The right stūpa is a beautiful engraving. It introduces a new type in this region. Standing on a double square terrace, which is receding in the second stage, it shows a high plinth, decorated with empty trefoil arched niches on the front side, on which rests a series of mouldings, four in number in this case, which carry a semi-circular dome, enclosing a trefoil arch. Here the moulded bases take the place of high drum. It is on them that the dome directly rests. The dome is crowned by a harmikā (relic chamber) which is shaded by nine umbrellas, each umbrella receding upward, and the whole giving the shape of a cone, triangular in shape. The side struts from the dome support the umbrellas, over which there is a jar finial. The banners hang down from the finial and small bells from the ends of the lowest umbrella. Only rightside banners are seen in the picture. This type of stūpa is known in Gandhāra in the late

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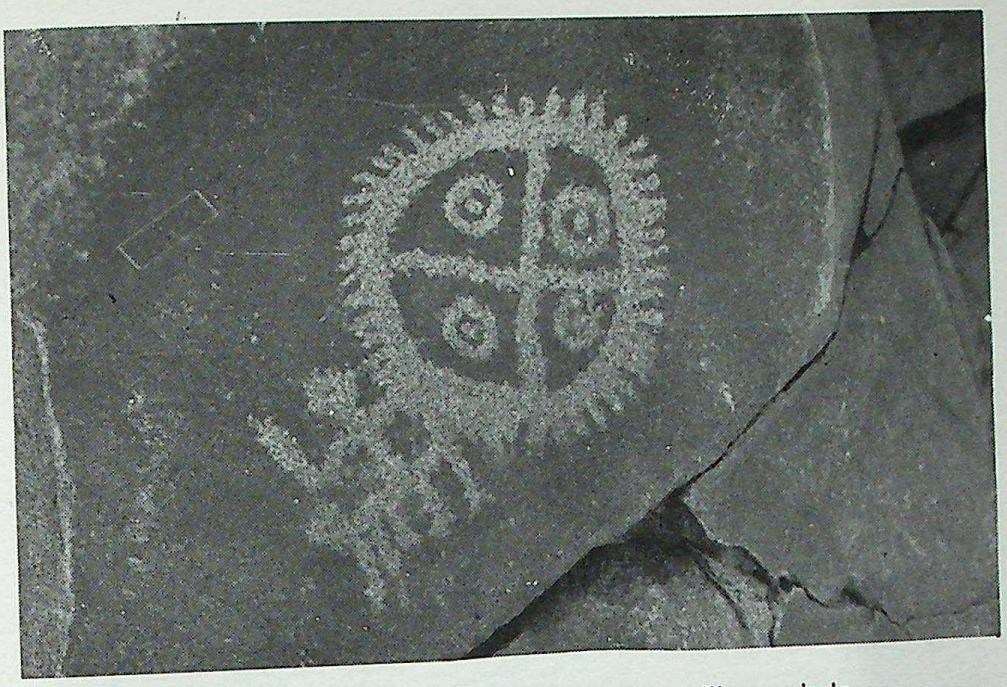
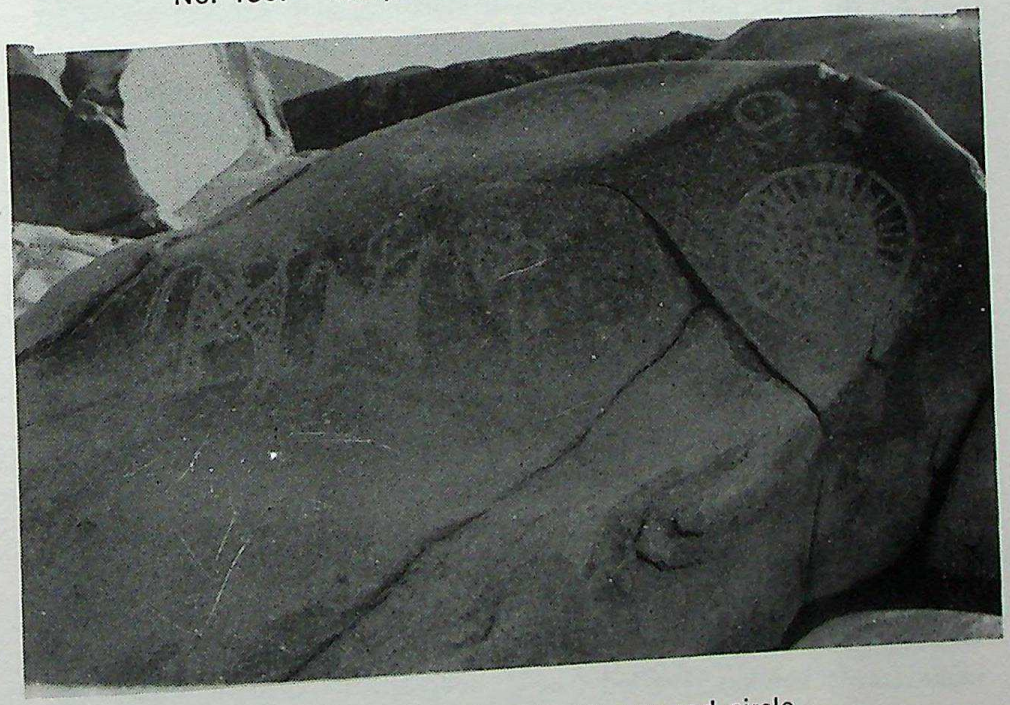


No. 135. Thalpan I : A horse-rider pulling a circle.



No. 136. horse-rider, battle-axe and circle.

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period. The inscription on the right in the same script reads :

OṂ DEVADHARMOYAṂ KṚITAṂ MAYĀ SIṂHADEVENA

"Oṃ. This is the divine dharma, made by me, Siṃhadeva."

On the left the stūpa makes a poor imitation of the former. It has the same double terrace below, arched niches at the high plinth, straight mouldings in three stages, and then the dome enclosing the trefoil arch. The *harmikā* (relic chamber) and the umbrellas are not clearly seen because the engraving is rather shallow. At the bottom there is a later shallow inscription of 7th century A.D.

JĪVADHARMENA KṚITAṂ *i.e.* "made by Jīvadharma."

At the bottom left there is a short inscription in still later hand :

*Śrī Choṭa*

He appears to be the engraver of the later stūpa.

No. 118. This is another figure of Mañju Śrī in a different style found close to the first on a separate boulder. He is seated on a lotus seat but the lotus petals are not clearly marked. They are just shown by lines. The figure has the same complexion as the earlier one but he is putting on a different type of dress, which clearly shows the striped designs on the double legs. This type of striped design is also seen in the dress of the other Bodhisattva at this site. His right hand is in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose while his left hand, which is extended to the knee, holds a rosary of beads. The halo in the form of trefoil arch has curved hooks at its outer side. representing flame. This type of flamed halo is known in the Kashmiri metal style. The beaded necklace, the round face, the slant eyes and the triple pointed crown are clearly shown.

No. 119. This figure is on a separate boulder now broken into several pieces. Only two pieces have been found by the roadside at the same site. The head portion is missing. It represents the seated figure of the Buddha in meditation pose, seated on a double lotus seat, raised high on a pedestalled stand. The figure is putting on garments in the Gandhāran style, covering both the shoulders. The folds of the garments make parallel curves. Three curves are seen at the chest and three semi-circular folds conceal the feet and a long oval fold falls below over the seat. The arms are straight down with the elbows ending in angles. The whole body is enclosed in a halo of trefoil shape, the inside of which

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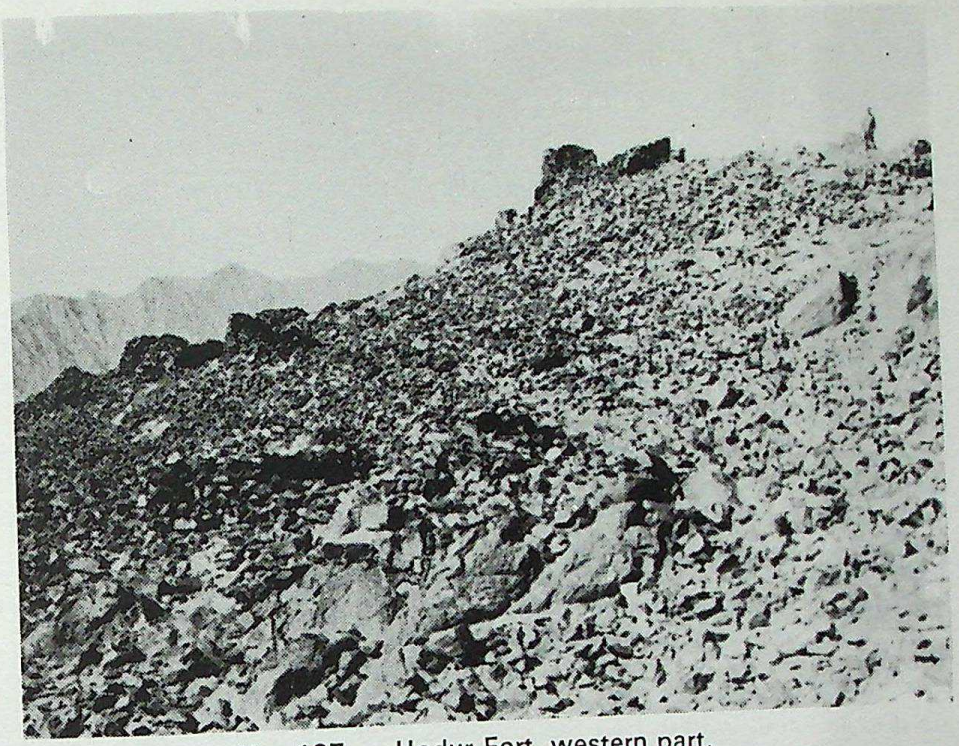
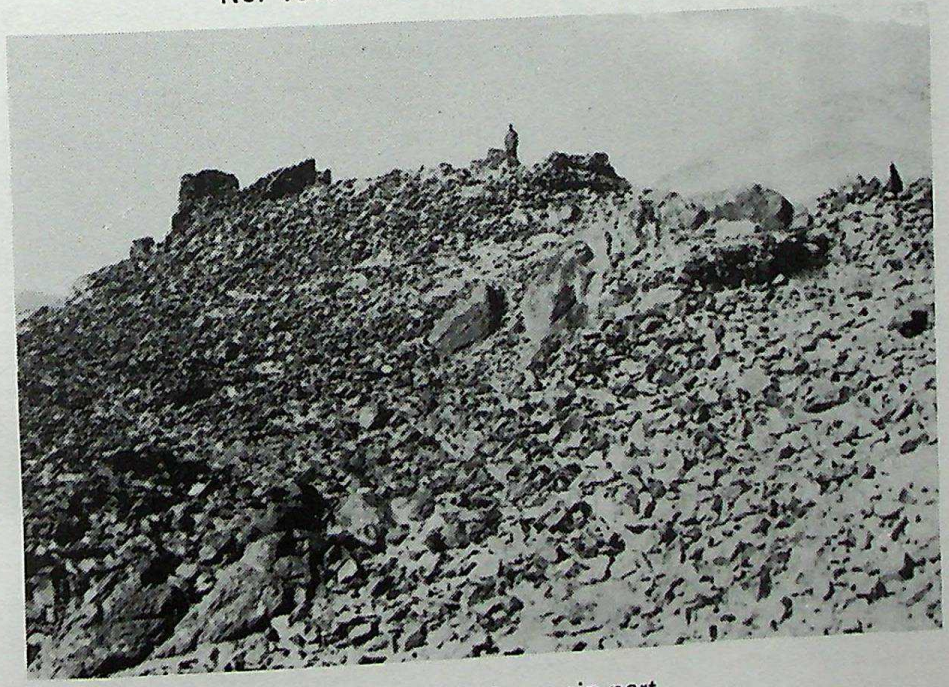


No. 137. Hodur Fort, western part.



No. 138. Hodur, main part.

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is decorated with golden plates—a style of decoration also seen in other figures. But the engraving is rather poor and appears to be imitative. It may be placed in early 7th century A.D.

Nos. 22-25. This is a remarkable frieze, engraved on a hill, at Chilas I just by the roadside at some height on a flat surface facing east. There are five human figures, including the devotee, three stūpas, including two late stūpas and one late animal, and two inscriptions—one on the right on the top of the devotee and the other on the left side of a seated Bodhisattva.

(i) The standing figure, on the extreme right, is of Maitreya, standing on a lotus seat. His whole body is enclosed within a flamed halo, represented by a trefoil arch and the flames indicated by a series of inclines within the double outlines of the halo. The head is enclosed within the upper curve and the tall body from the neck downwards in the long lower foils. He is standing barefoot on the soles, turned sideways, and is putting on Indian type of striped *dhoti* usually seen in the Kashmiri metal style, from the waist to the ankles. The stripes are double lined, with dotted design in the alternate stripe. As the *dhoti* is not diaphanous, the legs are not visible. The lower end of the *dhoti* is seen between the feet. Over the body there is an upper garment which covers his left shoulder and comes down acrosss the body to be tied at the right side of the body below the elbow. The arms are parallel to the curves of the lower foils while the shoulder makes a smooth bend. The left arm, whose elbow near the waist is shown by a double line, is extended down, holding a pedestalled waterpot. The right hand, which is brought up to the chest, is in *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose. Both the arms have armlets while a beaded necklace is seen at the neck. The face is rounded while the eyes are slant, protected by eye-brows. The ears have ear ornaments. Over the head is the three-pointed crown. No inscriptional tablet labels the figure but the identification is possible because of the waterpot in hand. The style appears to be a copy of metal work.

(ii) The devotee, next to Maitreya, is kneeling down, sitting on his toes, his left hand holding a beaded rosary and the right hand has a lamp. whose handle ends in a trilobate arrow shape, with a flame burning on an incense burner. The fleshy long youthful face is moustached and shows a sharp nose, pointed chin, extended (but not slant) eyes.

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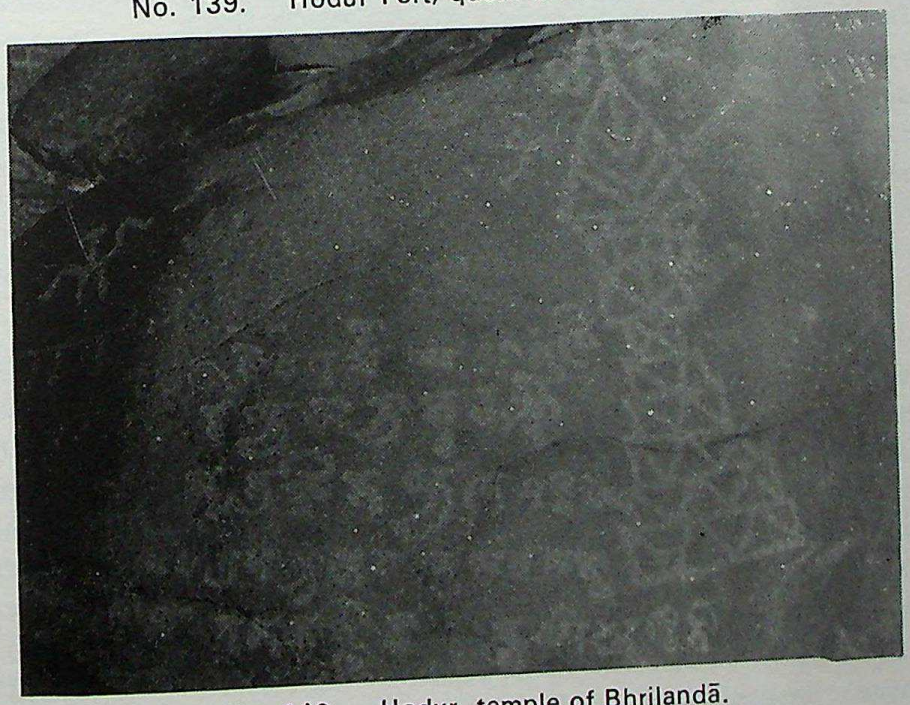
No. 139. Hodur Fort, quern inside a room.



No. 140. Hodur, temple of Bhṛiḷaṇḍā.

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On the head is a long hair, which is tied around the head with a fillet (probably studded with golden beads). He is putting on a diaphanous dress, beneath which his legs and body are clearly seen. The triangle, seen in front below the waist, is probably the case of the dagger. The whole appearance is of royal figure, which is attested by the third line of the inscription on his top left, which reads :

MAHĀRĀJA SIṂHADEVA, *i.e.* "King Siṃhadeva".

(iii) The third, on the left, is that of Mañju Śrī, and is presented in still different style. The devotee is actually worshipping this figure, suggesting importance of this Bodhisattva in his eyes. The figure is seated on a double lotus seat, raised high on a column. The whole body is again enclosed within a halo, shown by double lines in a trefoil shape, the interior of which is decorated with golden plates. Mañju Śrī is seated cross-legged but the legs and feet are concealed by the lower garment, whose parallel curved folds fall in a semi-circle over the seat, as seen in the late Gandhāran phase. The dress is borrowed from Gandhāra but there is a zigzag beaded decoration across the chest, which is entirely new style of showing the upper garment—a practice probably borrowed from the metal work of Kashmir. At the neck there is a beaded necklace. The hands are in the meditation pose, which is rather unusual. The face is rounded and the eyes are slant. The ears which are extended have ear ornaments. On the head is the same three-pointed crown. From the right side of the halo a beautiful scroll curls up. The inscription on the right reads :

OṂ NAMO ĀRYA MAÑJUŚRĪSTATHĀGATĀYA

"Oṃ. Salutation to Ārya Mañju Śrī, the Tathāgata".

It is difficult to understand why the last word "Tathāgata", which is actually an epithet of the Buddha, is used here. But the manner in which the seat of Mañju Śrī is raised on a column suggests that special veneration was given to him. This can also be inferred from the place given to him on the right side of stūpa, to the left of which the Buddha is seated (see below). Or it may be that the word "Tathāgata", used here, does not apply to Mañju Śrī but to the figure of the Buddha on the left side of the stūpa as there is no other inscription for that figure. In that case the language will have to be corrected and between the two names "and" will have to be inserted. In any case the prominence given to Mañju Śrī is beyond doubt.

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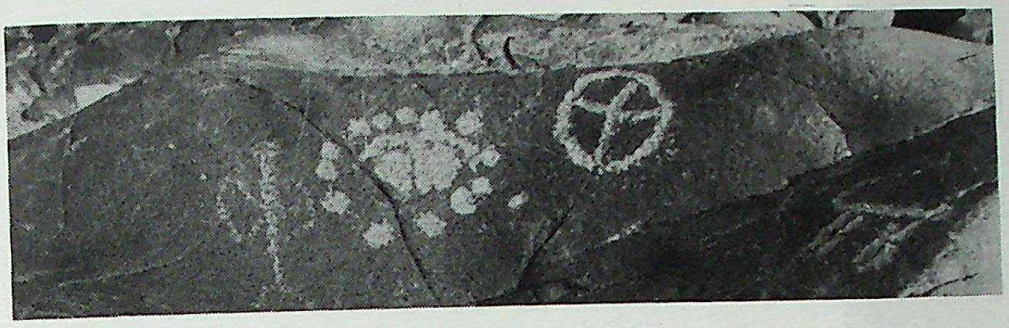

No. 141. Hodur, Battle-axe, eye-motif and circle.

No. 142. Hodur : temple of the mother of Khira.

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No. 120. The picture shows the stūpa and the seated figure of the Buddha. The stūpa is more decorated than the one seen in no. (117), but the type is the same. It is also standing on triple receding terraces. The lowest terrace is decorated with triangular uprights, the second by a series of diamond design and the uppermost has a series of columns with base and capital. Such pilarettes also decorate the plinth of late Gandhāran stūpas. Under this analogy this third terrace can be the plinth. On it rest three moulded bases, the lowest one half-round and the upper two straight. It is on the last upper base that the semi-circular dome stands and encloses a trefoil arch, containing a relic casket with a conical stopper. But the dome is crowned by a harmikā (relic chamber), overflowing with side volutes. Then comes a series of nine umbrellas, each umbrella being shown by a broad band, receding in tiers and making a triangular cone. It is topped by a small canopy ending in a finial. A flying banner is seen on the right side. The left side banner could not be shown as the rock slides away.

(ii) On the left there is the seated figure of the Buddha in Gandhāran style, as can be known from his dress except for the halo that is exactly the same as is seen in the seated figure of Maňju Śrī on the other side of the stūpa. The figure of the Buddha is very close to the stūpa. In fact the lines of his seat are drawn over the lines of the stūpa, suggesting that it was engraved soon after the stūpa. His seat is again raised on a column but the lotus petals of the seat are drawn just in simple lines. The garments show the parallel folds and fall in semi-circular curves over the feet and the seat. It covers both the shoulders. The hands are in the meditation pose. The golden plates decorate the interior of the trefoil arch. The face is rounded and the eyes are slant. The head is shaven with the *ushṇīsha* (top knot) indicated by a full circle. From the right side of the arch a scroll emerges and ends up in floral curls.

It is difficult to understand why the Buddha figure was engraved later and he is placed on the left side of the stūpa in a clumsy manner. There is little doubt that he received the same reverence but it is possible that in the eyes of the local ruler Maňju Śrī held a higher place.

No. 122 The picture shows the fifth figure to the right of the Buddha along with the inscription. It is a seated figure of Avalokite-

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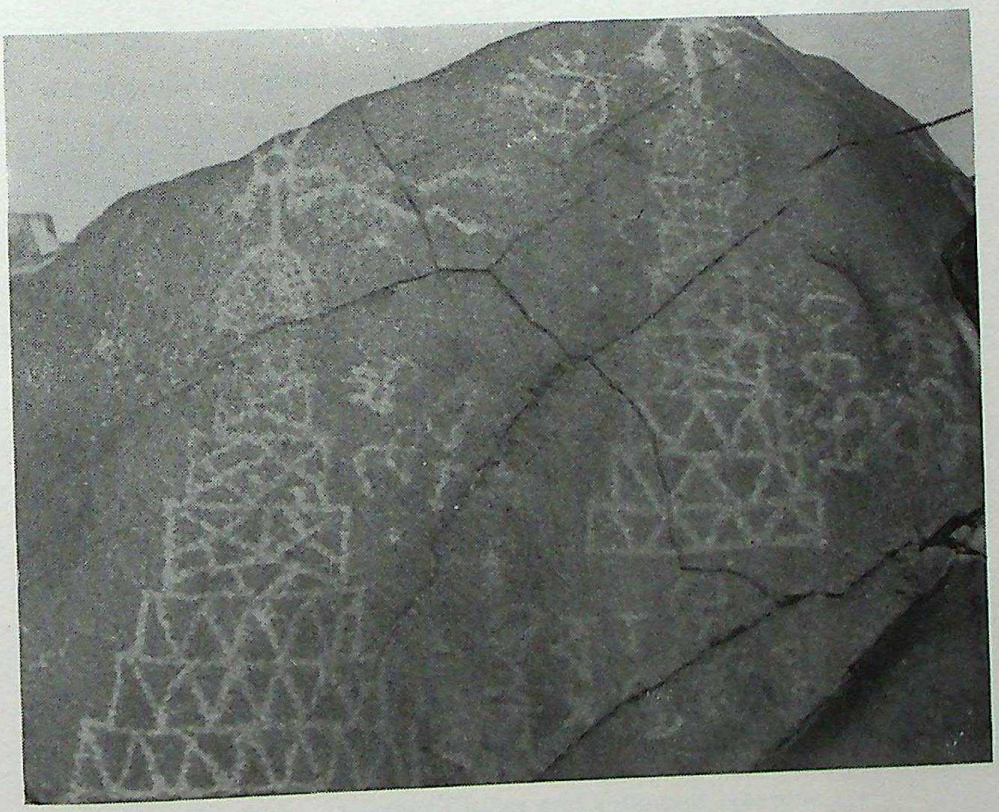
No. 143. Hodur : Temple of Vṛilaṇḍā



No. 144. Hodur : two temples.

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śvara, seated on a lotus seat, in a cross-legged fashion. The whole body is enclosed within a halo of trefoil arch, as is seen in the case of the Buddha and Mañju Śrī. He is putting on the striped type of the Indian *dhoti*, as is the standing figure of Maitreya. His right hand is in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose and the left is holding a lotus stalk, the flower being indicated over his shoulder. His complexion, eyes, crown and ornaments are of the same type as other Bodhisattvas. But no zigzag pattern is seen here. Four-line inscription reads.

*Oṃ Namo Lokeśvarāya Sādhaṃ Siṃhadeva Sabhāryā*
*Pratisaṭhāpita Āryāva PAD (M) A (PĀ) NI*

"Oṃ. Salutation to Lokeśvara. The work of Shimadeva, alongwith his wife, was established, Ārya Padmapāṇi."

The last two lines are not very clear. The word "Pratisaṭhāpita" appears to be a mistake for "Pratishṭhāpita". In the last line the first word is clear but the second word is conjecturally restored. However. "Ārya Padmapāṇi" is never used.

No. 123 This is the lone seated figure of the Buddha, not far from the former frieze, on the same rock, facing the Indus river, just above KKH. The Buddha is seated on a lotus seat, whose single row of petals are turned down. The legs are crossed with the soles of the feet visible upward. He is putting on the garments in the Gandhāran style. covering both the shoulder and legs. The folds of the garmnets are shown by parallel curves. He has a round face with the eyes slant. The ears are distented. Hair is not shown but the *ushṇīsha* (top knot) makes an almost circle. The figure is enclosed within a halo of double lines in the shape of trefoil arch but the halo is simple and undecorated. The hands are brought up to the chest in the preaching pose. This appears to be one of the early creations on this side of the river.

Plate 8. A little above the KKH to the east of the above-mentioned frieze, there is a lone tall boulder which shows carvings on its two faces. That on the east face is a panel of two Bodhisattvas, One *Pūrṇaghaṭa* ("Lucky Jar") and a stūpa. This is again the work of Siṃhadeva.

(i) The left standing figure is labelled Śrī Lokeśvara within the halo over the head. He stands on a double-petalled lotus seat, bare foot,

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No. 145. Hodur : two temples and inscription on left.

No. 146. Hodur : Circles add a winged creature.

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within a long halo of trefoil shape, the interior of which is decorated with golden plates. The upper part of the body appears to be naked but is probably covered by diaphanous garment. The lower part has striped *dhoti* from the waist to the ankles in the same style as the earlier standing Maitreya. The right hand is in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose and the left is extended down, holding a lotus stalk. Below the seat the inscription reads.

OṂ NAMO ĀRYĀVALOKITE (ŚVARĀYA)

"Oṃ. Salutation to Ārya Avalokiteśvara".

(ii) The second standing figure is that of Maitreya as the dim label within the halo records. The type is similar to the one seen in the first frieze. He is also standing on a double-petalled lotus seat but in the present example the seat is placed over a double terraced pedestal, His dress, composition and facial expression are exactly the same as of the earlier figure of Śrī Lokeśvara. However, the attributes are different. The right had is in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose and the left hand is holding a waterpot. The halo has, however, different decoration, In the present case the halo has double row, with the interior decorated with inclined lines in a fashion giving the impression of multiple leaves. The inscription under the seat reads.

BAUDDHA ŚAMANA ŚŪREṆA

"By the hero of the Buddhist monks"

Does this title apply to the king who made this panel ? It is difficult to say. On the other hand if there is a grammatical mistake and the engraver has wrongly given instrumental case in place of nominative case, then the title would apply to the figure of Maitreya himself. Such a title for this Bodhisattva has not been noted earlier.

(iii) By the side of the figure of Maitreya is a *Pūrṇaghaṭa* (Lucky Jar) a pedestalled vase with flaring mouth and narrow neck containing flowers - a sign of good luck. This type of vase must have been in use at that time Several pieces of red pottery have been collected here and they may have been pieces of such pots.

(iv) Still to the right is a stūpa in the same style as seen before but the lower terrace, in this example, is simple without any decoration. The plinth shows only three arched panels. The dome encloses a trefoil arch and the umbrella makes a triangular cone but the finial is entirely

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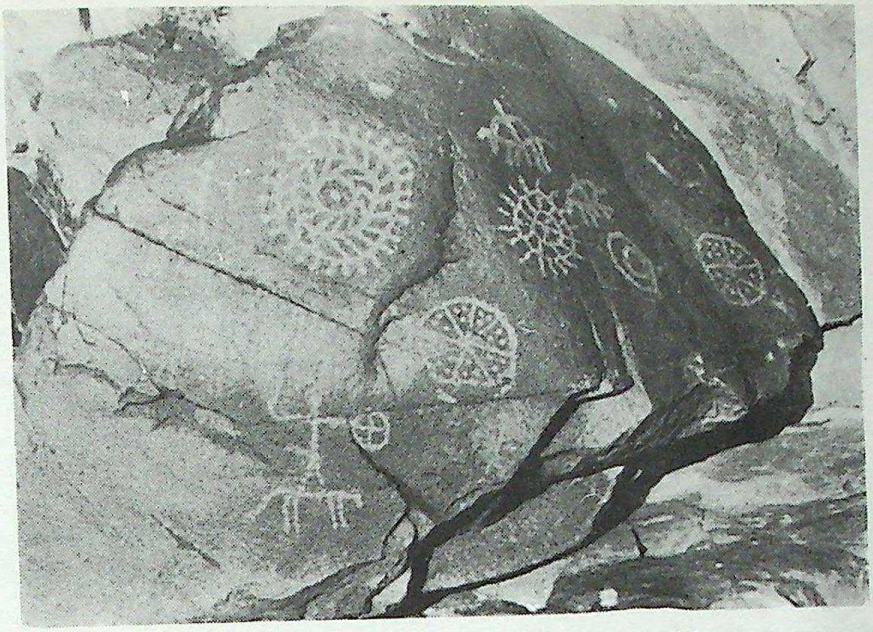

No. 147. Hodur : Circles and horse-riders.

No. 148. Hodur : Circles and battle-axes.

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different. It appears to be in the shape of a *śikhara* (curved spire) with a spike above, from which hangs down a banner on either side. Below the stūpa there is an inscription, reading :

OṂ DEVADHARMOYAṂ SIṂHADE(VA)SYA

"Oṃ. This is the divine *dharma* of Siṃhadeva."

Nos. 125-127. This is a unique carving of a Jātaka scene at Chilas on a small boulder between KKH and the river Indus, a little west of the Thalpan bridge. The late Brāhmī inscription on the top right gives the following label :

*Vyāghrāṇi Dharma Nyāyaṃ*

"The principle of duty to tigers"

This is the second representation of this Jātaka, the first being noted by Hiuen Tsang in his description of Siṃhapura and identified by Sir Aurel Stein in the Mahāban hills of the North-West Fontier Province.

In the middle there is an elaborate stūpa, which, in type, is similar to those seen in Chilas I but there are more details added in the present example. It is built on triple receding terraces, the lowest one of which is decorated with floral scroll, the middle one with three trefoil arches but the uppermost is plain. It is on them that a short plinth rests but it has a thick band as in the case of the umbrellas. Then come semi-circular mouldings. The semi-circular dome stands on them. It encloses a trefoil arch, which is empty and has a double semi-circular lines on its apex. Above the dome is the *harmikā* (relic chamber) on a pedestal, is guarded by two guardsmen, one on each side, holding a long spear in their hands. Then comes a series of nine broad bands representing umbrellas, round a central *yashṭi* (handle), further propped up by struts on either side. From the lowest umbrella a bell hangs down on each side. From the top also such bells hang down. The finial is a jar topped by a crescent and circle. On its either side is a flying banner. To the right of the banner is the label inscription noted above. This is the archtype of the stūpa seen also on the other side of the Indus river.

To the left and right of the stūpa are other figures. The main tiger legend is on the right side in the middle row. At the bottom are two devotees, one on the left and another on the right. The devotee on the left side is kneeling, sitting on his heels, is putting on a loin cloth and an upper *shawl*, which leaves the right shoulder bare. He has a

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No. 149. Hodur : Circles, horse-rider and horse.

No. 150. Hodur : Horse-riders, ritual tiger and a tree.

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sharp nose and a long face. He is holding something (probably a beaded rosary) in his right hand and an incense burner in his left hand. He appears to be a monk as an inscription on his top reads :

NAMOSTU ŚRĪCHARAṆE BHIKSHUSYA

"Salutation at the glorious feet. Of the monk".

Unfortunately the name of the monk is missing. There is another inscription just below his hand : NAMO BUDDHĀYA, *i.e.* "Salutation to the Buddha".

On the right hand side the devotee is lying prostrate on the ground before the stūpa with his head resting on his two hands. He is putting on Indian *dhoti* and an upper *shawl* On his left side a curved sheathe, probably of a dagger, is seen. As his face is on the ground, the complexion is not clearly visible. The inscription above the devotee reads :

MAHĀ ŚRĪ STŪPA DIVYOTTARA CHARAṆE NAMAḤ

"Salutation at the feet of the great and glorious heavenly stūpa."

Above this inscription a person, who is putting on just a loin cloth, is lying on his back, with his legs extended, his right hand on his chest, his face rounded, eyes slant and *ushṇīsha* (top knot) overhead. This, no doubt, represents the Bodhisattva. On his chest stands a lioness or tigress, piercing, with his left claw, the chest for flesh. The hungry animal is drawn in outline. Behind are two cubs sitting over the feet of the Bodhisattva, in the act of looking at the flesh. Still behind is another animal probably waiting for his chance. This is the proper scene that represents the label given on the top. This scene of "body sacrifice" by the Bodhisattva is also significant reflecting the hard condition of living in this region.

Above this representation a platform is constructed by the side of a tree on the left. Behind this platform two persons are standing. One is looking to the left and another to the right. Both these persons have *ushṇīsha* (top knot) on their heads and appear to be Bodhisattvas, rather than lamenting monks, as is surmised by Sir Aurel Stein in his description. They have rounded face, slant eyes and upper garment covering only one shoulder. They have their right hands in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose. Each one of them is conversing with a leaning man in front, who

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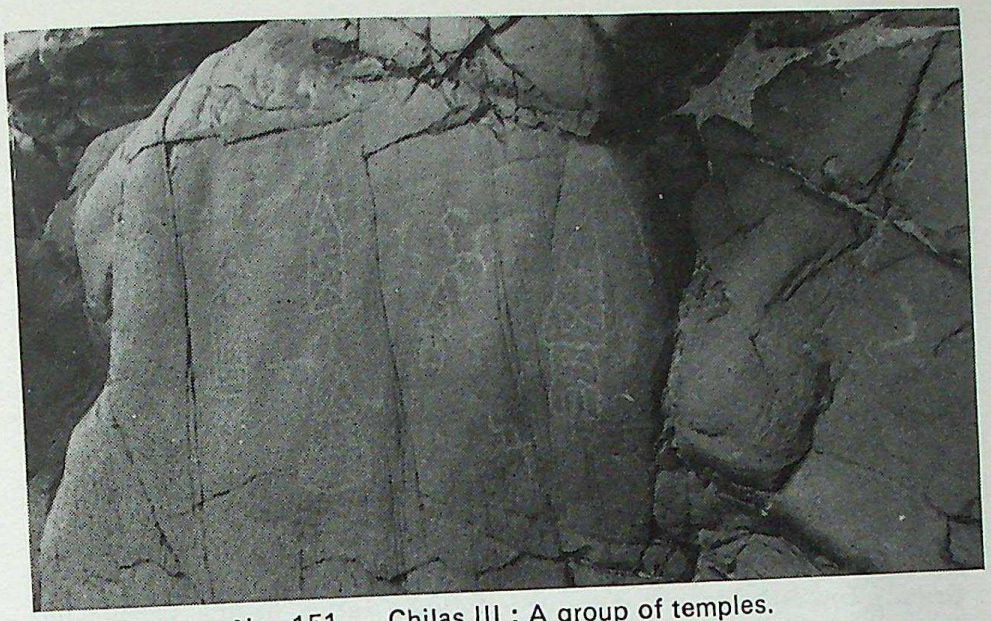

No. 151. Chilas III : A group of temples.

No. 152. Chilas III ; temple, horsemen, and battle-axe.

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is saluting The left person is emerging from the tree, probably representing the tree deity. If the tree stands for the forest, he should be taken for the forest deity. The right person is also emerging from the air, probably representing the *dikpāla*, the deities of four quarters. As they are saluting the Bodhisattva, it seems that here the story presents two acts of the drama, once the Bodhisattva in conversation with the forest deity and second time with the *dikpāla*. The conversation appears to be after the sacrifice. In that case the two deities are not only saluting but also admiring the great "body sacrifice" made by the Bodhisattva. There are two inscriptions above the Bodhisattvas. The left one reads :

MAHĀDEVA PADĀNI (NAMAḤ) *i.e.* "Salutation at the feet of the great lord."

The right side inscription reads : "MAHĀSATTVA" *i.e.* "The great being." This last title is also applied by Hiuen Tsang to the Bodhisattva of "body sacrifice". At the right bottom of the central stūpa there is another inscription :

OṂ DEVADHARMOYAṂ....."Oṃ. This is the divine dharma—".

Unfortunately the name of the donor is not readable. There is yet another inscription at the bottom of the right side devotee. It appears to be the well-known Buddhist creed "YE DHARMA....."

Plate 9. While we are talking about the main stūpa style that has been evolved so far at Chilas I, it is well worth speaking of a big stūpa, standing not far from the "Tiger legend" rock, on a separate boulder between KKH and the Indus river, prominently visible from the road. The stūpa is carved on the western face of the rock in thick lines. It represents the arch-type of the stupa and may be placed in the seventh century A.D. The date is confirmed also by the accompanying inscription to the right of the stūpa, which reads :

DEVADHARMOYAṂ KUVARA VĀHANASYA

"This is the divine *dharma* of Kuvaravāhana."

The stūpa stands on four receding terraces, the lowest terrace showing six columns. The upper terraces are plain, except that they have double lines at the sides. These are topped by a wider torus moulding. On this is erected the dome, which encloses an empty trefoil arch and has at its apex double semi-circular lines. The *harmikā* (relic chamber) on the dome consists of four steps, over which is a

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No. 153. Chilas III : Wheel, temple and horse-rider.

No. 154. Chilas III : Game of horsemen.

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series of seven umbrellas. At the lower two ends of the umbrella a bell hangs down. The *yashṭi* (handle) protrudes above the umbrellas and is highly ornate. This supports a horizontal balance, from either end of which hang a bell and a banner. Over this is a small canopy crowned by crescent and circle. From this canopy flying banners float down on either side. The inscription on the right is partly defaced by big word ŚRĪ written later.

## Third Group

This group includes some devotees selected from different sites to illustrate the physical type in the art form.

No. 124. This picture is taken from a boulder at Chilas I, on the other face of which two standing Bodhisattvas, Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya, are carved. Here the stūpa type is of usual design. The dome, which rests on three decorated terraces, encloses an empty trefoil arch but the *harmikā* (relic chamber) on its top is not properly drawn. The umbrellas make a cone and have a crescent and circle as the finial, from which hangs down a banner only on the left side. The devotee, seated on the left, is richly attired with tight-fitting dress and a dagger on his side. He has a long bearded face with sharp nose. He holds a rosary in his left hand and an incense burner in his right hand The late Brāhmī inscription in the seventh century character reads.

OṂ DEVADHARMOYAṂ PRIYAŚŪRASYA

"Oṃ. This is the divine *dharma* of Priyaśūra."

Plate 10. The second devotee is seen at the site of Ziārat II. The stūpa is again of the same type with decorated terraces, four in number. The dome encloses an empty trefoil arch. Little bells hang down from the lowest umbrella but there is no flying banner. On the other hand a horn is figured to the left top of the stūpa. The devotee has a different complexion and dress. He has a bearded and moustached long face, sharp nose, almond-shaped eyes, long hair, combed back and tied with a fillet round the head. He is putting on a tunic and tight-fitting jacket, decorated with four-petalled flowers. He is having a sword at the waist, has a broad shoulder and slim body with a flower in his left raised hand and a burning incense burner in his right hand. He has raised his body slightly upward on his bent legs. The inscription reads :

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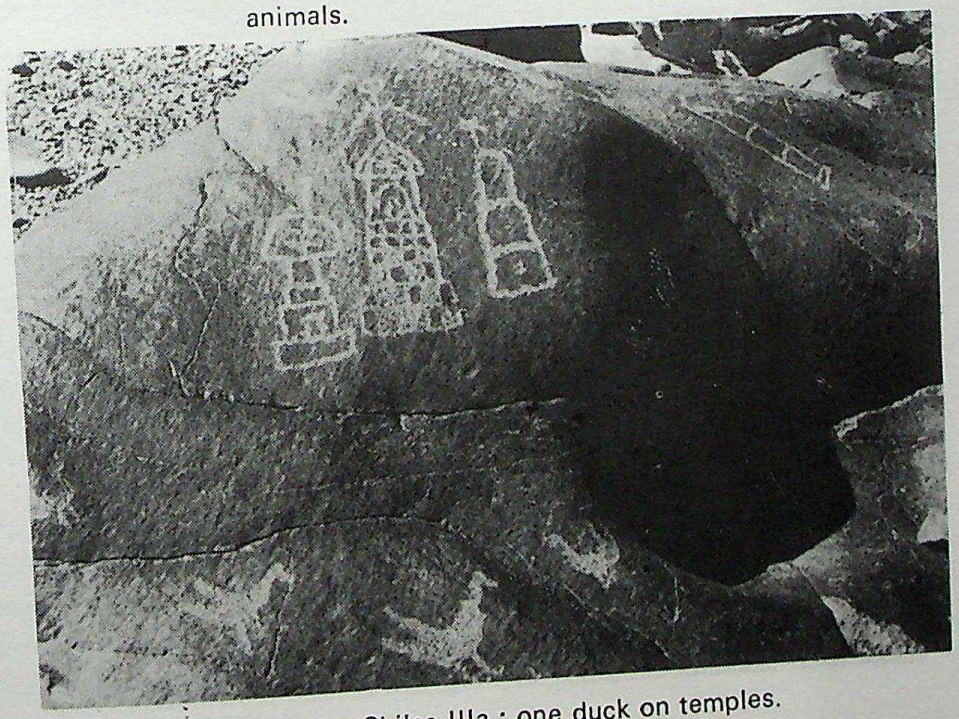
No. 155. Chilas III : Two-headed serpent and other animals.



No. 156. Chilas IIIa : one duck on temples.

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OṂ DEVADHARMOYAṂ PRIYACHANDRAPUTRA
DHARMASIṂHA (SYA)

"Om. This is the divine *dharma* of Dharmasimha, son of Priyachandra". Later several other figures were carved on this stone.

No. 128. This figure is on another rock at the Ziārat site near the above figure. In this case the incense burner is of a different type, consisting of a bowl on a long stand. The man has robust face, moustached, short hair combed back. His chin is fleshy, nose very sharp and he has long bejewelled neck. He is putting on long coat with sharp corners and loose baggy trousers. He is holding a long sword in his front.

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# CHAPTER VI

# BATTLE-AXE PEOPLE AND THEIR CULTURE

At Chilas II (chapter IV) we have already met these people riding on horse, holding battle-axe in one hand and a new type of bow in the other. On various stray rocks such people have been seen riding rough-shod on horse-back, chasing and hunting ibexes and making several complicated symbols, the commonest of which are various types of circles, rough squares or polygons with complicated internal divisions, each division sometimes enclosing dots. When did such people come and what was their culture, will be presented in this chapter. The question of their origin and of their original home lies outside the evidence available at present in Chilas. However, some suggestion has been made in chapter III above, Further question of their identity will be discussed towards the close of this chapter.

## Thalpan I Site

At Thalpan I there are two main outcrops of rocks. On one of them (northern one) Buddhas and stūpas are dominantly represented. The second (southern) rock has two parts, eastern and western. The eastern rock also shows some stūpas but the western one has exclusively horse-men, ibexes and various types of circles. At some places the eastern rock shows the overlap.

No. 129. It shows an earlier stūpa of a type so well known in the

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6th and 7th centuries A.D. Below the stūpa there are three poorly drawn ibexes. On the right there are two circles, one of which has its outer line over the base of the stūpa. On the left there are three more circles. Two of them, on the left, have radiating curves within. The top right has a smaller circle enclosing a dot and lines joining the two circles, between which are again dots. The bottom right circle encloses two more circles. Between the smallest and second circle, there is a series of circles having dots and between the bigger circle and the second one there are again lines. The last circle, on the left, is still more complicated. The bigger circle encloses two more circles and the radiating lines join the smallest circle with the outer one, thus making several divisions, each containing a dot. What is the meaning of these circles and dots, is not clear here.

No. 130. This shows another earlier stūpa. At its lowest terrace on top right corner, a later human is engraved. There are several ibexes around the stūpa. One horse-rider, with the horse having a bitriangular solid body, is just over the side of the stūpa. On the right there are four circles, two of which are similar to the two types described in no. 129 One circle, having radiating curves within, shows four dots on the left side. The fourth circle shows a new design. Its three concentric circles have the radiating lines joining the outer two but there are six divisions between the smallest and the second circle, each division having again minute circlets.

No. 131. It is from the same site and is more instructive. Here three circles are directly placed on the earlier stūpa. There are three more circles, one battle-axe on the top left corner and a standing human on the bottom left. The human appears to be a primitive man, wearing a leafy loin cloth, has his male organ indicated, his hands are stretched sideways. His left hand shows five fingers but the right hand has only three fingers in the form of a *triśūla* (trident). The representation is very enlightening. There are four new types of circles. One new circle on the left base of the stūpa has only dots within. Another smaller circle is touching the bigger one, which has circle of triangles within, probably indicating solar rays. This type of showing the rays is also seen in the stelae of Gandhāra sculptures. The inside of this bigger circle is further divided into four segments from a central small circle. Each one of this segment has a dot within a circle, except the north-west quadrant, which has two.

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No. 157. Chilas IIIa : horsemen and temples.

No. 158. Chilas IIIa : circles and temples.

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Such a segmentation is also seen in a circle to the left of the stūpa but this circle shows rayed lines at the exterior. Finally, the circle, on the top of the stūpa, has a cross within, making four segments, each of them having a dot within a circle and further from these smaller circles a single line emerges to the bigger one.

No. 132. It is also from this very site showing a beautiful stūpa of the earlier period, with jumble of animals below and to the left two horse-riders driving their horses, with a curved sword in hand. The horses are drawn in thickened lines. The riders, who are holding the reins in their right hand, are shown in a spirited activity.

No. 133. It covers the whole western face of a standing rock at this site and illustrates the whole gamut of the ideas that were held by these people at this time—multiple circles, horsemen, ibexes and battle-axes, drawn over the earlier stūpas. The type of circles follow the designs already discussed. On the extreme right there are two circles, touching each other, and a third smaller one below, with six ibexes in between. Other circles can be seen occupying different places in the picture. Intermixed with them are mounted horsemen who are riding roughshod over the stūpas. A number of battle-axes are placed here and there.

No. 134. It shows two circles touching each other and six ibexes. Underneath is an earlier late Brāhmī inscription of 6th-7th century A.D. reading *Dharmaputrasya*, i.e. "Of Dharmaputra".

No. 135. It is from the western rock showing a horserider pulling a rayed circle, which is divided into four segments by a cross, each having a dot within a circle,

At Thalpan I there is another picture on the southern face of the northern rock. On the left is an ibex having a bitriangular solid body with dented curved horns—a type which became so popular in the later period. To its right is a horse-rider restraining his horse, which is shown in a very realistic manner, having solid body and ordered tail behind. The horse-rider is not in the shooting spray. Over the horse is a rayed circle with spokes having one dot in between the spokes. As it is not a hunting scene, it seems that the representation is ceremonial.

No. 136. It is also from Thalpan I and shows, on the left, two horse-riders looking right. The riders are having sword in their right hand and rein in their left. The horses, which have bitriangular body,

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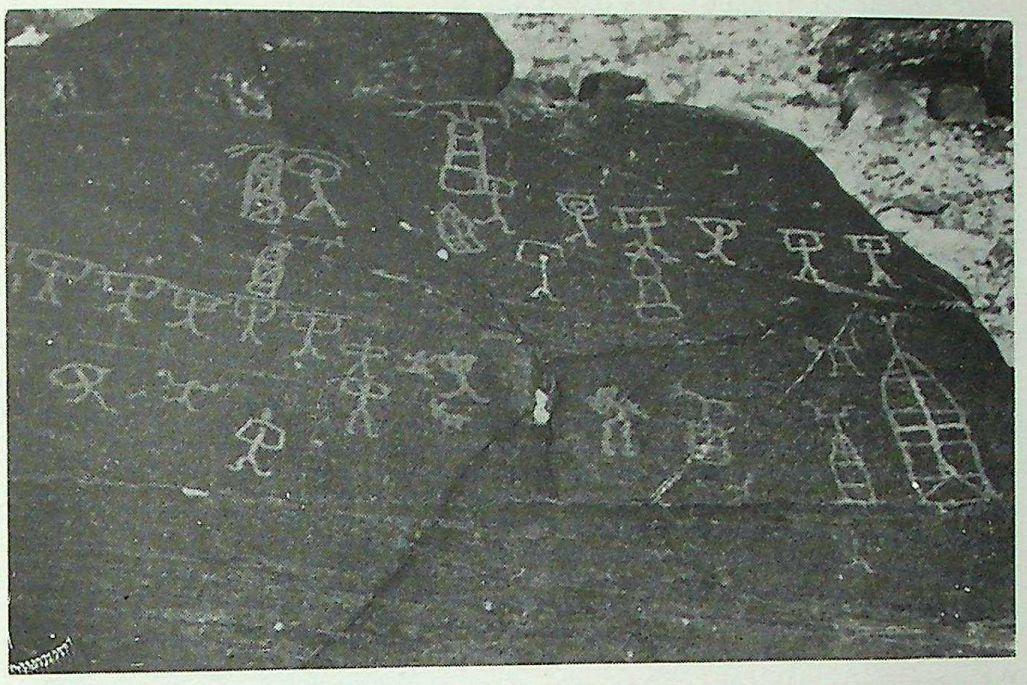
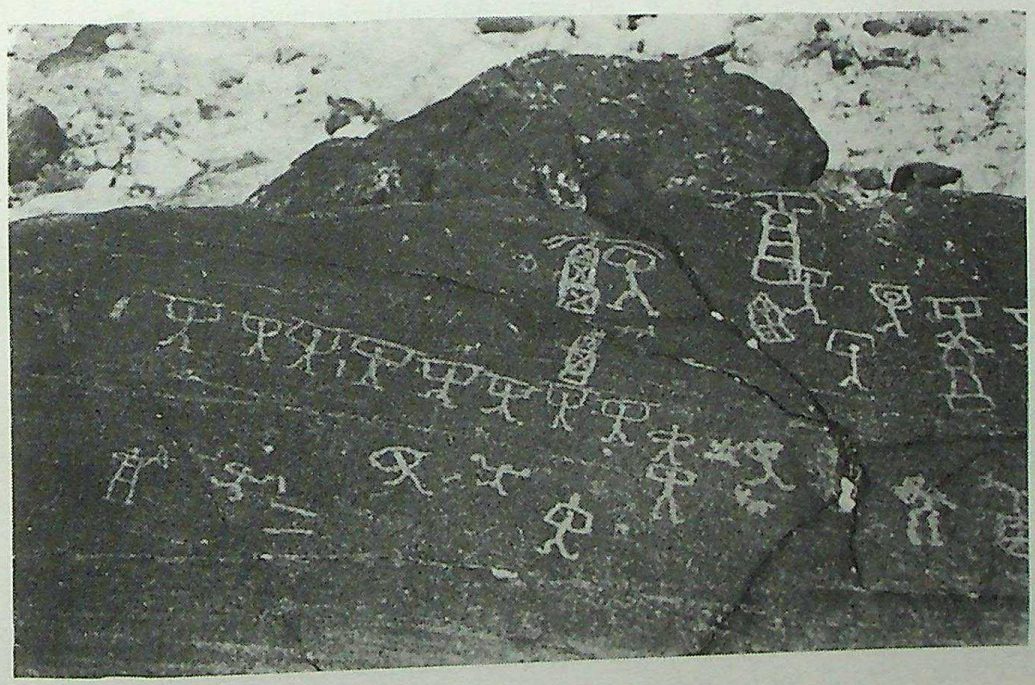


No. 159. Chilas IIIa : Sword dance.



No. 160. Chilas IIIa : Sword dance.

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are depicted differently. The front horse has solid body while the horse behind has its back triangular portion hatched and the front portion has a floral design. Another small man, who is standing, is not only touching the front horse but also a battle-axe, drawn in outline. To the right is a circle. The meaning of this depiction is not very clear except that the battle-axe and the circle played definitive role in the life of horsemen.

All these representative drawings from Thalpan I prove beyond doubt that the mounted horsemen had no regard for the stūpas. They came here after the main period of stūpa engravings, most probably in the beginning of 8th century A.D. Their social life included horse-riding and ibex hunting, and they had special regard for battle-axe and various types of circles, which by the fact of their being rayed, most probably incorporated some solar concept.

## Hodur Site

There is a greater variety of material of these people obtained from the site of Hodur, about ten miles west of Chilas, on the right bank of the Indus river. Here the river makes a sharp bend towards the northern hill and in between the point where the Indus touches the hill and the Hodur river on the west the hill slopes and scattered boulders in front are full of carvings. The modern village of Hodur is situated close to the Indus river, approachable by a new bridge built on the Indus while the fields lie along the Hodur river and also on the right side of the Indus. On ridge, facing the Indus river, there is an old fort commanding both the rivers and looking down the pilgrim path that came from Thalpan on the right bank of the Indus. The carvings are seen at the lower level of hillocks and boulders and some forward based outcrops that were once washed by the Indus water and hence very slippery. These outcrops, cut off from the main hill, have also archaic carvings of humans, hunters, ibexes and of some mounted horsemen. These carvings have their own story to tell. Leaving them there, we come back to the west and start with the fort.

Nos. 137-139. The fort is situated on a ridge that is cut away from the main hill, leaving a flat space for occupation at some height. The fortification wall that follows the contour of the ridge also goes across the intervening space over to the hill on the other side, thus making an extensive area available for habitation. The main citadel is on a higher ridge while lower down rooms have been built for residential purposes. The

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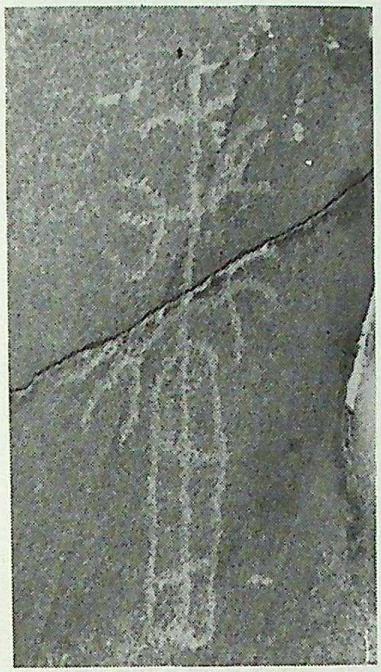

No. 161. Chilas IV : A temple.

No. 162 Chilas IV : A group of four temples.

No. 163. Chilas IV : A temple with an inscription.

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walls are built of dry stone masonry, the stones being quarried locally. The corners have round bastions but many of them, alongwith the walls, have fallen down, resulting in a great heap of cut stones that lie scattered on the ridge. But at some places walls are standing four to five feet high and make rooms of different shape. Broken querns are seen in a number of rooms. They were used for grinding corns before the water-mill was introduced in this part. Large number of their finds suggests that almost every household had its own grinding stone. Potsherds scattered all over the place relate the fort to this period. There is only one approach from the south by a steep stepped path cut through the ridge. The passage is guarded by bastions. It leads not only to the citadel on the top but also to the residential area between the hill and the ridge. On the citadel some ashes and charcoal are also scattered, suggesting that at some time the fort was burnt. The location and the type of the fort appear to be similar to the hill forts of the Hindu Shahis in the North-West Frontier Province. No inscriptions nor carving has so far been found inside the fort. Its situation characterises it as a hill fort, known to have been built at this time in the hilly regions to guard against the main inroads along the highway then in use.

It is at the foot of this ridge that the boulders lie scattered amidst wind-blown sandy deposits. These boulders bear carvings all along as we move eastward. The first carving is seen on a rock surface facing east, which shows a new type of structure. Apparently it looks like a stupa as it is standing on four receding terraces, each terrace having zigzag lines. On its top is a circle, which supports a semi-circle, upon which rests a conical construction in the shape of a *śikhara* (temple spire) over a broad base. The interior is decorated with lines but a vertical rib goes up and holds a *triśūla* (trident) as its finial, from which hangs down, on the right, a banner again ending in a trident. An inscription, on the right, in late Brāhmī writing of 8th century A.D. reads : *Jīvadharmena kritaṃ, i.e.* "made by Jīvadharma."

No. 140 This picture shows an elaboration of the earlier structure. Here we have six terraces, five lower ones having the same zigzag lines but the sixth has Maltese cross, over which rests a semi-dome. The side struts are seen on it but they support a *śikhara* (temple spire) in place of umbrellas. The finial again consists of a *triśūla* (trident), from which hang down banners. The one on the left again ends in a trident. The prominence given to *triśūla* (trident) and *śikhara* (temple spire) clearly prove

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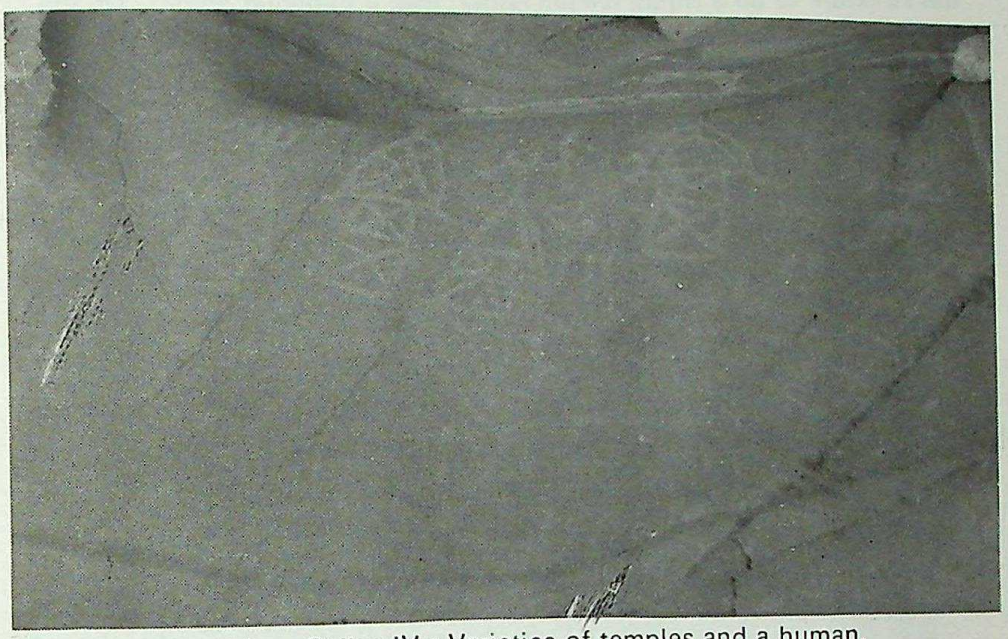
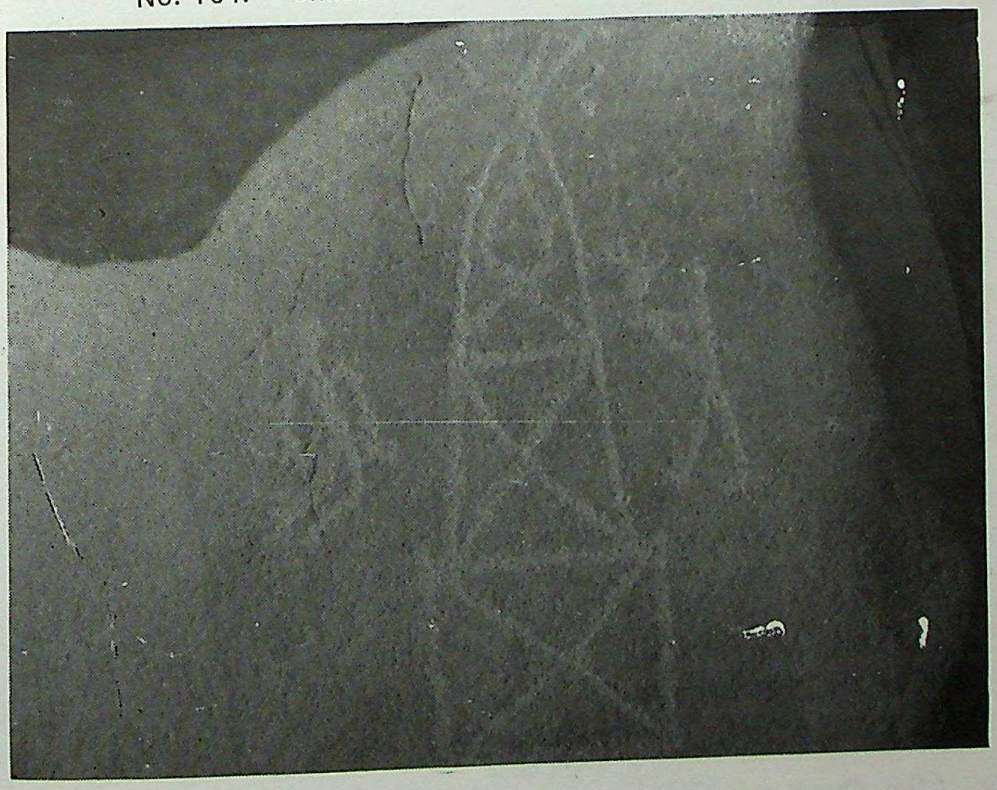


No. 164. Chilas IV : Varieties of temples and a human.



No. 165. Chilas IV : A temple and worshippers.

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the structure to be a Hindu temple rather than a Buddhist stupa. On the left there is a mounted horseman, and also another horse. An inscription in the Brāhmī of the 8th century A.D. reads :

*Oṃ devadharmoyaṃ Mātuṃkhi—*
*rasya bhāryā Bhṛiḷaṇḍā—*
*mrita kṛitasya Śaśaṅkane—*
*na mātupuṇyabhāva śu sarva satvā*
*nāñcha stutiraṅginā-ṅgāyāsturiti*

*Translation*

"Om. This is the divine *dharma* of the mother of Khira, Bhṛiḷaṇḍā-mṛita, the wife. Made by Śaśāṅkaṇa, with the idea of merit for the mother and in praise of all the beings."

Here the construction of the language is very faulty. Two names of the husband and wife are entirely un-Sanskritic. The translation has been done in this way in view of what is known from the text in inscription No. 143.

No. 141. The picture presents a battle-axe on the left, eye-and-nose motif enclosed in a dotted circle and a circle enclosing a cross. To the right is a simple ibex. A little to the right (not in the picture) we have three more circles, one of them is shown by dots. On the western face of a boulder we have a markhor and a circle. On the top there are several solar symbols and an ibex. On another place we have four of them with dots and a poor copy of a temple.

No. 142. Further ahead we see another temple standing on five terraces, the lowest two show zigzag lines, the next two show six-petalled flower in the middle, and the uppermost has a Maltese cross. with side struts supporting a conical spire, the interior of which is pecked with dots. The finial again has a *triśūla* (trident) on a spike, from which hang down banners. On the left we have an inscription, in which a later form of the letter '*Ya*' (bipartite form) has been used. The inscription reads :

*Oṃ devadharmo—*
*yaṃ mātuṃ Khira—*
*Vṛiḷaṇḍanāṅkitena kshiti-r(l)—*
*ti*

*Translation*

"Oṃ. This is the divine *dharma* (of the) mother (of) Khira, marked by Vṛiḷaṇḍāna. (This) is the abode."

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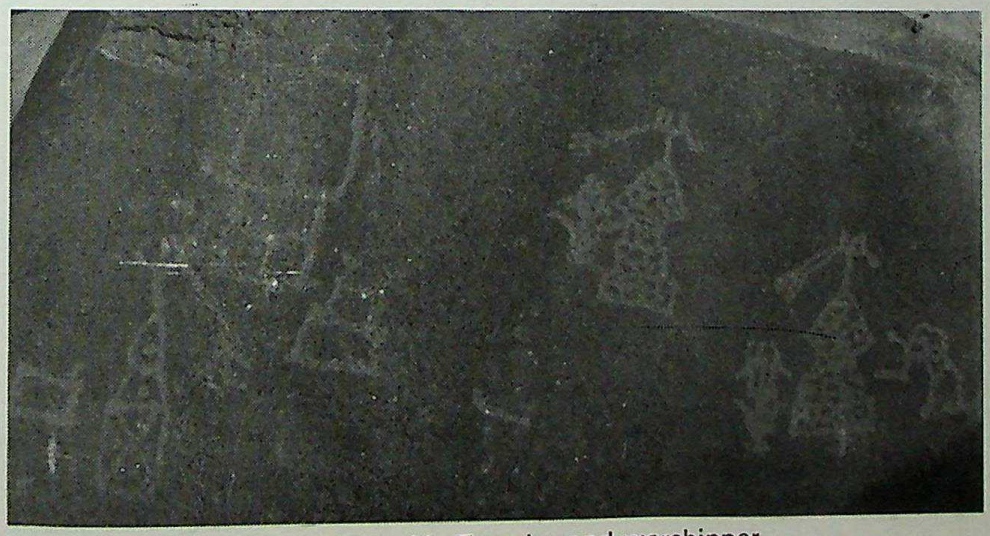
No. 166. Chilas IV : Temples and worshipper.



No. 167. Chilas IV : Temples and worshipper.

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Here the spelling of the mother's name is differently given. The word "*kshiti*" may be a mistake for "*kīrttl*", meaning "fame".

No. 143. Below the above there are four more temples. One of them has four decorated terraces, topped over by a semi-circular dome, from the middle of which rises a shaft, ending in a *triśūla* (trident) finial. A banner ending again in a *triśūla* (trident) flies to the right. At the bottom there is an inscription reading :

*Oṃ devadharmoyaṃ Jīvadharma*
*Sadvīra bhāryā Vṛiḷaṇḍāsya*
*Mātujitena*

"Oṃ. This is the divine *dharma* of Vṛiḷaṇḍa, the heroic wife of Jīvadharma, (erected by) Mātujita."

This is a very short inscription and hence the name of the wife is also shortened. The grammatical construction of sixth case in both the names suggests that that they are inter-related and hence Jīvadharma is taken as the husband. His name occurs in several other inscriptions.

No. 144. Another rock has two more temples with a circle in between on the top and inscriptions below in a script which is still more evolved. The most instructive letter forms are '*Ka*', *Kha*', *Ma*', '*Da*' and *Va*'. The left temple is standing on seven terraces the right one on six. The lower three terraces are decorated with zigzag lines. The next two of the left and the one of the right has several subdivisions based on diagonal. The next has a cross. The *śikhara* (temple spire) has pecked marks inside. The finial is of the same type as in no. 142 with flying banners also in the same style. The inscription reads :

On the left
*Mātu*
*Khira*

On tha right
*kitena*
*divira*

At the bottom
*Oṃ divira ti*
*kitena divira*

"*Divira* (temple) was made (by) the mother (of) Khira."
"Oṃ. (this) is the *divira* (temble). *Divira* (temple) was made.

No. 145. A little to the right top there are two more temples having five decorated terraces, pecked *śikhara* (temple spire) and

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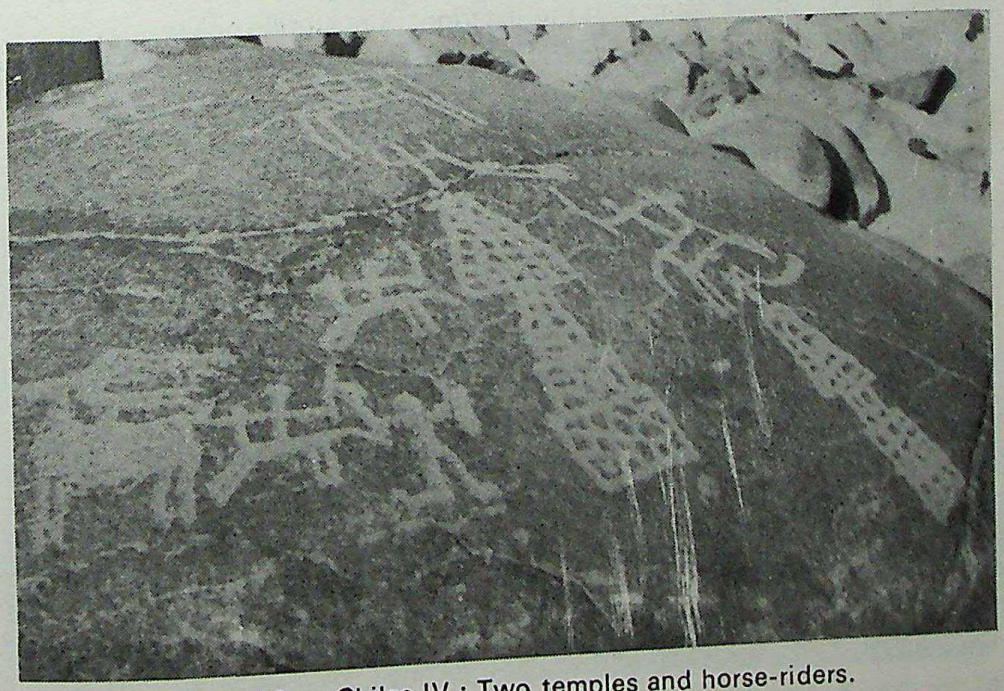
No. 168. Chilas IV : A temple and horse-rider.



No. 169. Chilas IV : Two temples and horse-riders.

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*triśūla* (trident) - topped finial with double banners to the right, each ending in *triśūla* (trident). There is only one inscription on the left in the evolved script as given in the above inscription :

*Oṃ devadharmoya (ṃ)*
*mātu-Khirena*
*Vṛiḷaṇḍāmṛitenā*
*ṅkitena*
*divira*
*patti* *Translated*

"Oṃ. This is the divine *dharma*. (This) temple was made by the mother of Khira, marked by Vṛiḷaṇḍāmṛita."

As we proceed eastward more and more temples of similar type are seen. Some of them have semi-domes on the top with a *triśūla* (trident) finial. Sometimes these temples are simplified but invariably they have *triśūla* finials. The name of Jīvadharma is referred twice in other places in the late script.

No. 146. On another boulder we have three circles, a winged creature in the middle and a horse on the bottom left. The right circle with radiate curves inside shows flames at the exterior. The middle one is a rayed symbol enclosed within a circle. The left one has a rayed circle enclosing thickened spokes with a dot and a circle in the middle and other dots on either side of dividers between spokes. The creature in the middle has spread-out wings, two legs, with a fat oval body and a circular head on a stem-like neck. Apparently he is in the dancing pose. It. is difficult to say what it represents. To the left is a horse, with thickened body, looking right.

No. 147. On another boulder there are five circles, five mounted horsemen, two dogs and one markhor. One horseman at the bottom is riding on the horse holding a circle with cross inside in his left hand and a battle-axe in his right hand. The dogs and the standing man on the left are a part of a hunting exercise. Two of the solar symbols have dots within the divided segments while two others are rayed. The last one has only two simple concentric circles.

The simplest temple consists of a tapering structure with some horizontals within and a *triśūla* (trident) directly placed on its top. One of the them bears a late inscription :

*Vachaba diti* (correctly *kiti*). i.e. "the work of Vachaba."

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No. 170. Chilas IV : Men, animals and temples.

No. 171. Chilas IV : Horse-riders, temples and other symbols.

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No. 148 : This picture clearly shows the association of two battle-axes with five circular symbols. One of the battle-axe, on the top, is solid while the lower one has its blade just in outline. Two of the circles (one is broken) are fully rayed, third is partly rayed, the fourth has dots within and fifth has no dots at all. Just outside this picture at the bottom there are two more circles and one ibex.

No. 149 : This picture has several circles, a solid horse on the top left, ibexes and humans in different postures. One human, on the left, is touching a circle Another human, on the right, below the circles having three fingers (in imitation of a *triśūla*) in each of his extended hands, is supporting another man on his top, who also has *triśūla* (fingers in the form of trident) in each of his two hands.

No. 150. This is a remarkable scene showing a sacred tree on the right with dotted branches, towards which mounted horseman are proceeding. Some of the horsemen have come down from the horses. Many of them are holding solid or cross symbols. Some have three fingers in their hands, probably representing *triśūla* (trident). At the bottom is a ritual horse or tiger with right leg raised, tail upward, the body having dots and mane below the head. The meaning of this scene could be anyone's guess because there are no inscriptions associated with the last few pictures. One thing is certain that the mounted horsemen had respect for this kind of tree, which they showed through their love of circles and *triśūla* (trident) and the ritual dotted animal below.

So far we had not noticed any Buddhist stūpa on this site. But as we proceed ahead to the east, we met with the engraving of a beautiful stūpa of 6th century A.D. on a boulder. It is standing on five terraces. Three torus mouldings support a semi-circular dome, crowned by a *harmikā* (relic chamber) with side struts and shaded by seven umbrellas, ending in a finial of crescent and circle, from which banners hang down on either side. Little bells are attached to the ends of the lowest umbrella.

Still to the east there is a big sloping rock, at the bottom of which is a big temple, resting on three receding tiers and a torus moulding, on which is a semi-circular dome. It is crowned by a conical *śikhara* (temple spire) ending in a (*triśūla*) trident finial, on either side of which is a flying banner. There are several smaller temples of simpler type to its left. It

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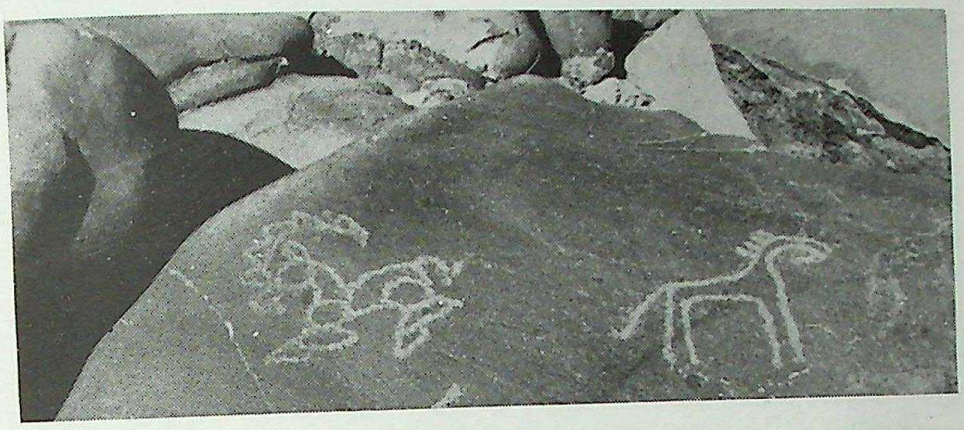
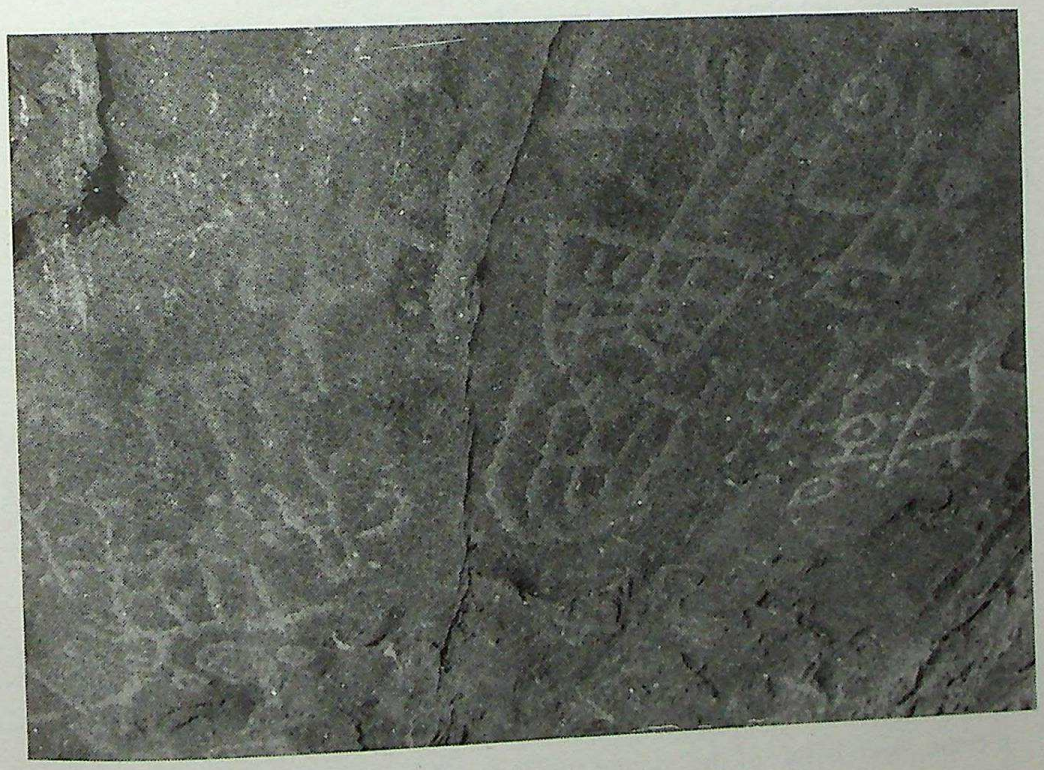


No. 172. Chilas IV : Two animals.



No. 173. Chilas IV : Boquet of tridents.

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seems that the smaller temples were erected later in the form of votive offerings just as the Buddhists did by erecting votive stūpas.

Still further ahead a human is engraved on a rock, standing, with his hands stretched sideways. Another man is standing, with his left hand holding a circle.

Another rock has a remarkable scene of late drawings. By the side of ibexes there are five standing humans, all apparently having a mask on the head, in a dancing mood. Two humans, on the right, have long rectangular bodies in outline, the left one has thickened body. The central man has three horizontal bars across the body. His hands, which show only three fingers in *triśūla* (trident) style, are raised up. His head, which makes a solid semi-circle, is having a trident. Between his legs is the male organ. The right-hand man has a round head on a short neck. His hands, which are bent down, show four fingers each. His body has a mid rib going down between the legs. The left hand man has also *triśūla* in his hands and overhead. The fourth man is below the right-hand human in the same style but he is little fatter showing three fingers in each hand. Before him is a solid man shown in profile, bent forward, as if in veneration. It seems that both the left-hand humans, in the upper and lower rows, who are shown with solid bodies as they are in profile, are in respectful pose to the other figures on the right, who, by virtue of their *triśūla* association, appear to be deities, perhaps some form of Śaivite concept.

Still further we find two figures of roaring tigers with one leg raised and tail curled up. There is another such tiger on the right, drawn in outline, with only a six-petalled flower on the body. On the south-eastern side there is another tiger in a similar style, To its bottom left is a temple. On the left side of the tiger an inscription reads : *Vidhikīrti*, meaning "work of Vidhi". To the right of the temple the inscription reads :

*Devadharmoyaṃ Saṃbhūteśvarakarasya*

' (This) is the divine *dharma* of Saṃbhūteśvarakara." The name of the person is very significant as it hints at Śaivite affiliation. On the eastern face there are two roaring tigers, one below the other, each having one leg upraised. One man, who is facing the lower tiger, has a sword in his left hand and a shield in his right. Below is a flower within a circle, each petal of the flower having a dot. The animal, which has been described here as tiger, is of a similar type identified earlier as a

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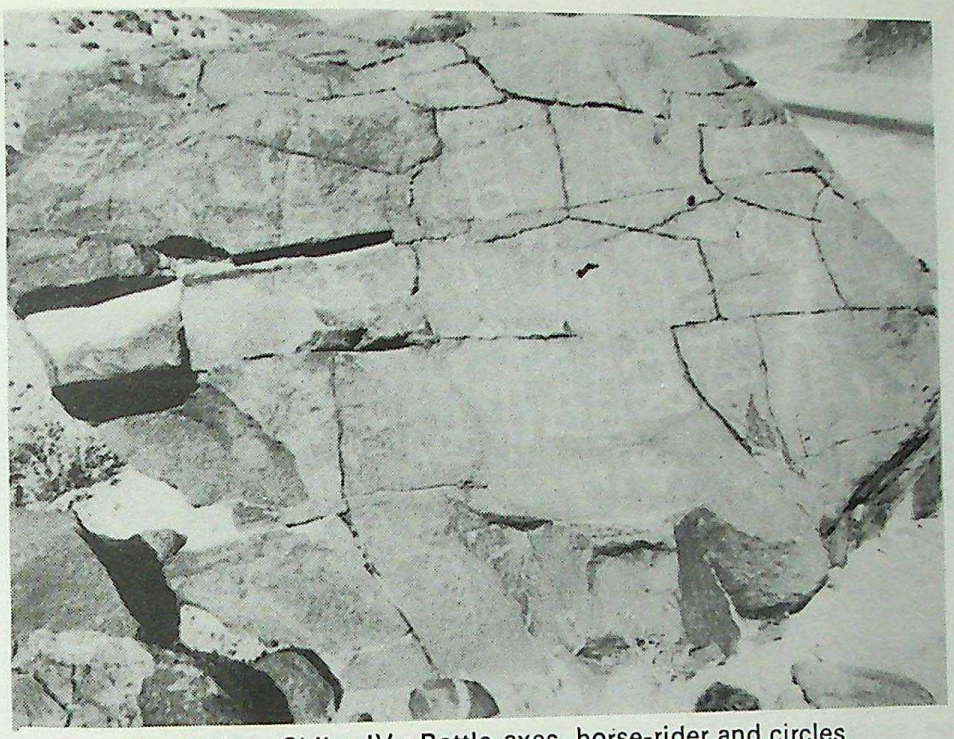
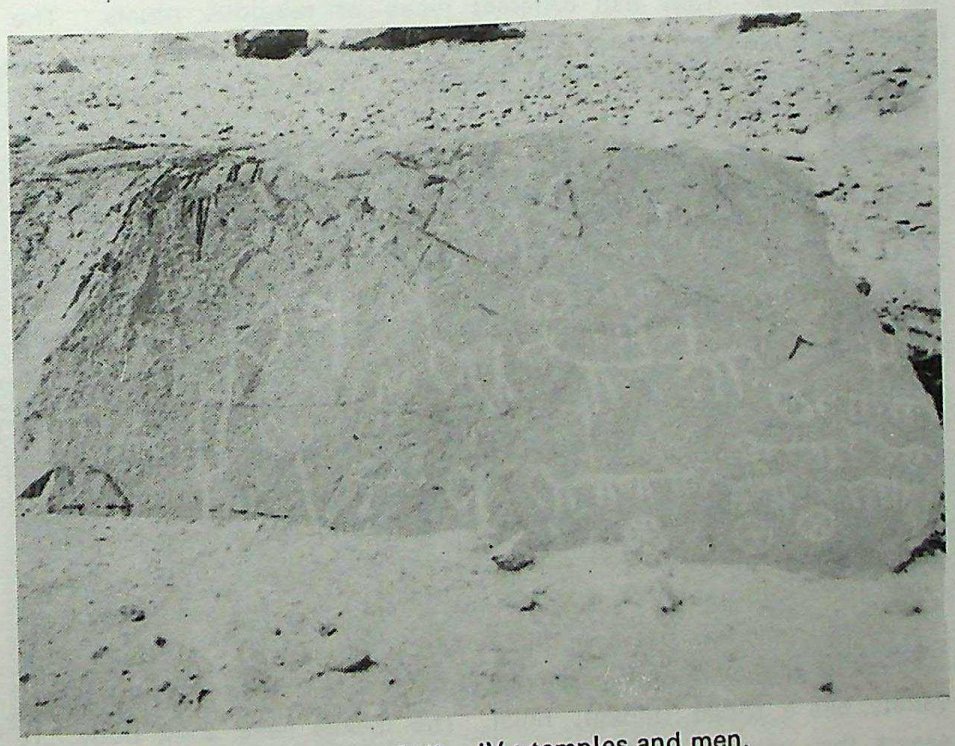


No. 174. Chilas IV : Battle-axes, horse-rider and circles



No. 175. Chilas IV : temples and men.

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horse. The mouth looks like that of a horse but the curled up tail and the claws at the legs bring them nearer to tiger. Some of the animals have dots within the body.

Further ahead is a complicated scene of horsemen, solid battle-axes and circles with dots. There is a man standing before two battle-axes. Still further, right upto the old bed of the Indus river, the engravings continue showing horsemen, horses, ibexes and more temples with illegible attempts to writing. It seems literacy died out at some later time.

The site of Hodur has placed before us a rich cultural material of these people, who, in the earlier stage, knew the art of writing but their letter forms are much more evolved than those seen in the Buddhist stūpas. There is one unusual letter 'ḷa', used in the name of a lady, *Vṛiḷaṇḍāmṛita*, who is spelt variantly. She appears to have two sons, Khira and Śaśāṅkaṇa and her husband was Jīvadharma. This family was responsible for introducing the temple type here, which seems to be associated with Śaivism. The temple style is derived from the earlier form of stūpa. They had different types of religious rituals. The building of forts and the presence of innumerable querns attest an ordered society and established agriculture. The ritual animals and the tree expand the repertoire of their religion. The masked humans and the *triśūla*-headed beings point to a deity that bacame popular among the local people.

## Chilas III Site

We can now return to the third site at Chilas III, which is connected with Hodur site in so far as the same man Jīvadharma has his name inscribed three times here. This hillock lies about 200 yards west of Chilas II. Its steep side facing the river has preserved one stūpa and a peacock of the early period, and of the later period three battle-axes,two ibexes and one temple. The stūpa comes closer to the type known in Chilas II, in so far as it has a high drum, resting on a plinth, with a tapering *harmikā* (relic chamber) shaded by three umbrellas. The peacock, which is walking to the left, has a solid body and tail (feathers) gathered. The axes are in outline and the temple, which is bottle-shaped of a later variety, has a *triśūla* (trident) finial. The ibexes have solid body. It seems that at some time this portion was drowned in the river flood as

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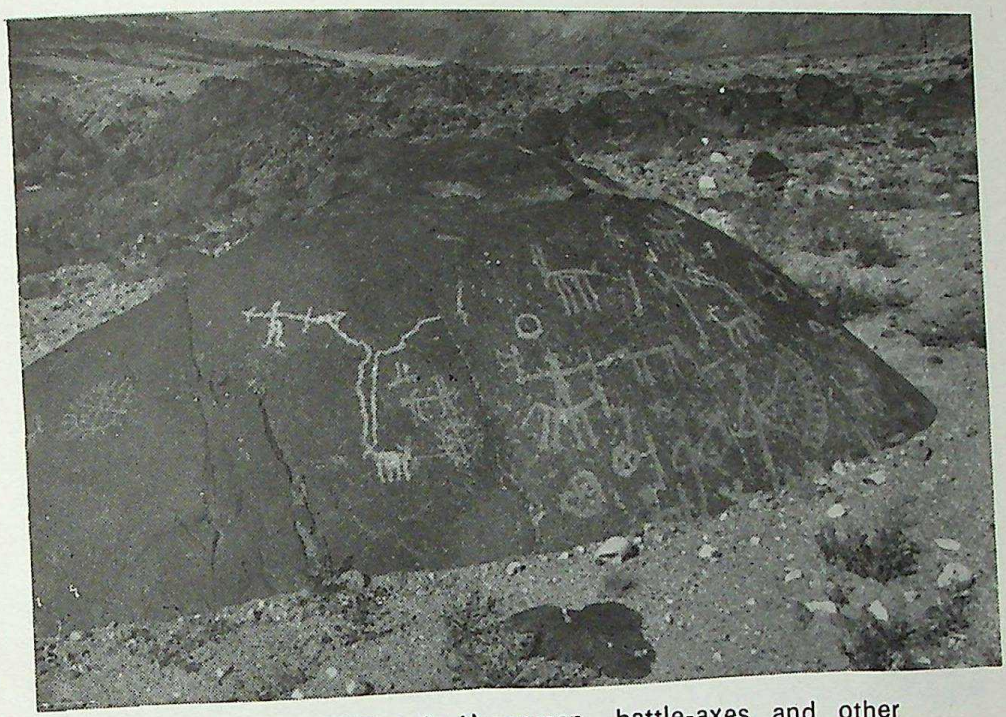
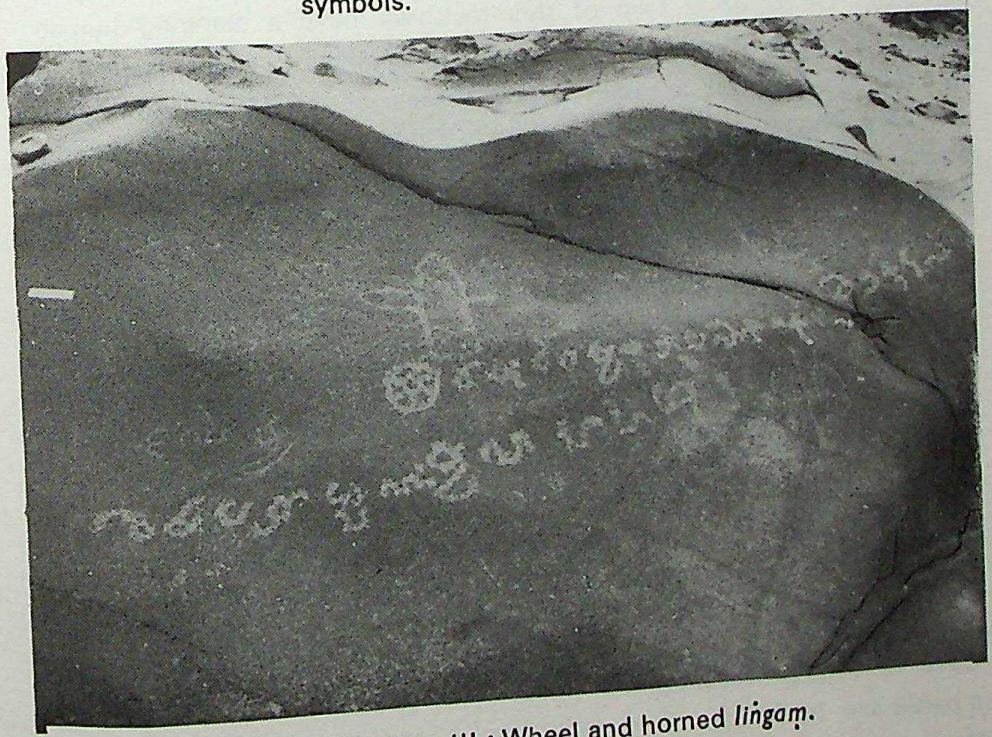


No. 176. Ziārat I : Horsemen, battle-axes and other symbols.



No. 177. Thalpan III : Wheel and horned *liṅgaṃ*.

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the water marks show. Only much later, after the water level lowered, the battle-axe people came here.

The southern face of this hillock has several cuts and flat surfaces, which have been used by later people. They are full of carvings of the battle-axe people. At the extreme eastern end one surface shows a man with a long coat, tied at the waist, holding a trident in his right hand and left hand akimbo. On the top is a symbol, probably representing a sanctuary enclosing a solid small circle with a *triśūla* (trident) ending staff overhead and three curved lines on either end of the structure. The northern face (no. 151) of this rock shows six temples in a group and seventh at a distance to right. Six ibexes are also engraved. One temple is of bottle shape, supporting a trident-shaped rod with a banner to the left. All other temples consist of single or double terraces, on which rests directly a conical śikhara (temple spire) having trident finial and flying banner ending again in *triśūla* (trident).

Another boulder (no. 152) shows six bottle-shaped temples, two large battle-axes and three horsemen. The handle of one axe is on a temple while a horseman, holding a trident banner, is on the top of this axe. On the other face of this rock we have a standing human holding a trident in both hands. Nearby is a complete temple consisting of a tall structure on a plinth with a gable roof and a trident overhead, from which banners fly on either side. One standing man is holding a wheel in his right hand and a bow in his left hand. A beautiful rayed battle-axe is seen right in front. There is yet another scene in which men are dancing around a battle-axe and a circle with a horse on the left. On the top is a hunter and above him a solar symbol. On the right are some more humans. On the western face of the rock there is another scene showing, in the middle, a tall temple, consisting of a plain base, compartmented building and a trident finial. On the base a man is standing perhaps in veneration. To the right is an inscription reading :

| | |
|---|---|
| *Śivāya*<br>*Śrī Laghu Pandiya*<br>*(sya)* | i.e. "(Salutation) to Śiva<br>of Śrī Laghu Paṇḍiya." |

Still later three more temples were engraved on the top. On the left there is another temple, with a human on its either side, each holding a battle-axe in hands. Two more circles and two more temples are also seen.

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No. 178. Thalpan III : A temple and a *triśūla*.

No. 179. Thalpan III : Tridents and altars

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Another group (no. 153) has, on the right, a man standing on a horse, holding, in his raised hands a rod supporting a trident on its either end and phallic symbol in the middle. In the centre is a temple, with a man on the left standing on its base, as if in reverence. Still to the left is a rayed circle with an inscription, reading : *Harikhachakra*, i.e, "the wheel of Hari (i.e. Vishṇu)". At the left bottom are some later crude temples and three humans. One of them is holding a battle-axe. On the top we have a new type of temple alongwith a battle-axe. So far the temples had straight conical spire but the present one has a curvilinear type of spire as seen in North Indian temples. The axe has a line of dots outside as well as inside. Further on the top there is a beautiful *chakra* (wheel) in double line, enclosing star-like spokes on a central circular axel. Out of several other temples, horsemen and battle-axes, the engraving of one animal is interesting. It has a trunk of an elephant but on the head some peculiar design is made.

On the western face of the rock there are two important scenes. On the top left we have three horse riders. Below is a group (no. 154) of four horse-riders, all are engaged in a common game of points. One horseman has gone ahead. The other man has fallen down from the horse. Two horse-riders behind are intent on catching something from fhe ground, on which nothing but four dots are seen. It is possible that the dots represent some objects.

At the bottom there is a dreadful scene (no. 155) of a big serpent (probably a python), its body twisted several times and having two mouths. The snake is in the act of attacking. Around stand some horses, horsemen and ibexes.

Proceeding westward we see more horsemen, battle-axes and temples. At one place two standing men are holding a wheel. Next is a temple with an inscription, reading *Nadakoṭasya*, i.e. "Of Nadakoṭa."

At another place there is a complex scene with an inscription, reading *Nindraga (sya)*, i.e. "Of Nindraga", Then follow three trident-topped temples on one side and a fourth temple on the other. Later at a corner three humans, with a sword and shield, facing a deer were engraved. On the right is another temple with an inscription, doubtfully read as Hrayoga (sya), i.e. "Of Hrayoga." Another group of three trident-topped temples have an inscription, reading *Jīvadharmasya*, i.e. "Of Jīvadharma." Another inscription at the bottom reads ;

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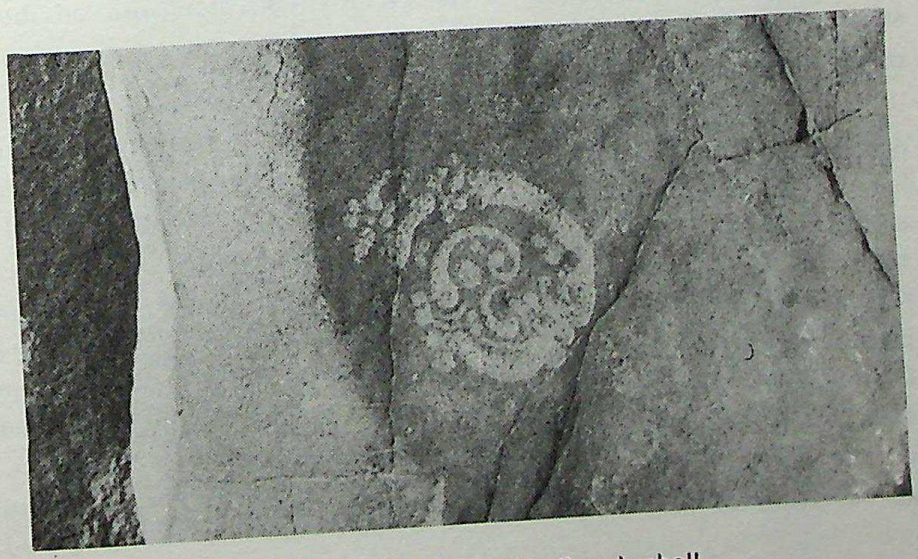
No. 180. Chilas I : Bejewelled conch-shell and inscriptions.



No. 181. Thalpan III : Conch-shell.

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*Devadharomoyaṃ Vip (ro) Nandidāsasya*

i.e. '(This) in the divine *dharma* of the Brahmin Nandidāsa." On the left another inscription reads *Piyena*, i.e. "By Piya", probably a name of the engraver.

Another interesting scene is the association of ducks with temples. At one place (no. 156) one duck is on the top and three are below. There is another elaborate temple with ducks on the westernmost part of the hillock. The inscriptions reveal the names of three more individuals, Rāmadata, Sūryadata and Mahīdata.

Coming up from Chilas III to a higher terrace of the Indus river a little to the west, we see two big boulders with flat surface an the top. The one on the western side is taller and shows multiple objects.

Nos. 157 and 158 : These give two views of the carvings on this western rock. The upper one shows, on the top, a standing man holding solid battle-axe and a wheel. Below him a human is standing on horseback with a circle attached to his right shoulder. Still below is a rayed circle. At the bottom is a man holding a bow and arrow. On the left side, besides a group of three trident-topped temples, we have a human standing before a stand of tridents and circles. Above is a single circle and then a human. The next picture is a continuation of this scene to left. A series of temples in the upper half is seen alongwith an ibex and a human. In the middle are circles and at the bottom a combination of a battle-axe, a circle and a temple.

Nos. 159 and 160 : These are the two views of a memorable sword dance on the eatsern lower rock. There are seven temples represented here. On the top we have four temples placed at different places while at the bottom there are three temples on the right side. The dancing scene is depicted before these temples. On the top row we have six persons, all holding a sword in their two hands over the head, and placed at intervals in a way showing movements of legs. Then come three more persons, the left two holding a sword overhead in the same style but the right one has a curved sword and a shield. Below the man, on the extreme left, a dog is moving to right. In the next row there are eight persons, all placed at equal intervals with sword overhead held in hands. In the middle there are three humans in different poses of sword display. To their right is an archer intent on shooting arrows. Below is another man with a sword before a dog. Five humans, still

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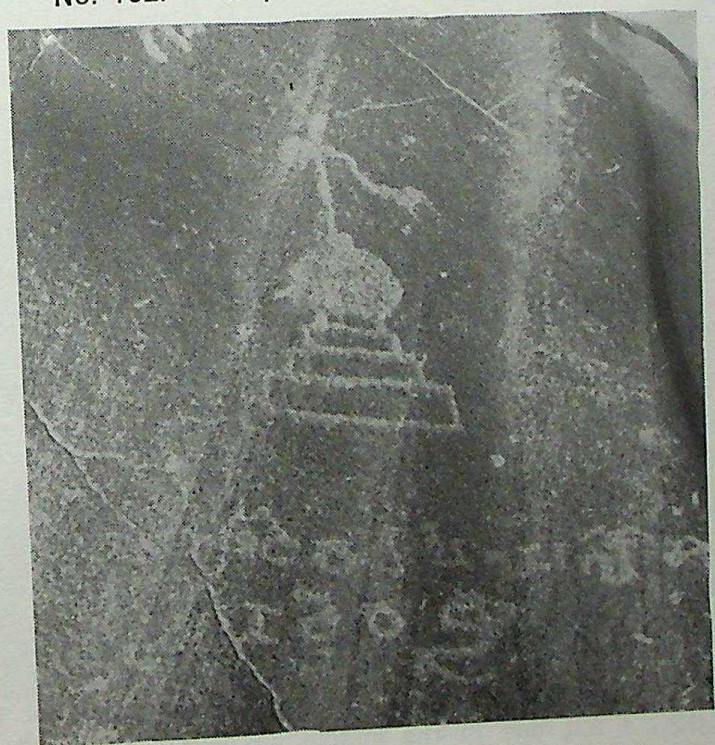
No. 182. Thalpan III : Temple and inscriptions.



No. 183. Thalpan III : Temple of Lakshmaṇa.

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below, are acting differently in different places. The extreme left one is shooting with bow and arrow. The next man is in running pose. The third and the fifth are turning the swords around their body and the fourth has extended hands holding some object. Thus the whole scene is a lively representation of the earliest sword dance so far known in this part.

Chilas III site has added varieties of subjects to the life of the Battle-axe people. The ceremonious battle-axe became the dominant symbol. The trident-topped temples became another hall-mark. It also became an object of worship. Still more important are two games—one is a group play of points by horsemen and the second is the sword dance. Serpent is seen creating a dangerous scene while ducks have been added to the repertoire of the figures.

## Chilas IV Site

As the site is widely spread for about half a mile along the bank of the Indus river, the material is scattered over several boulders seen in the midst of sandy deposits. The hall-mark of the site is the robust representation of an ibex (Plate 12) on a single standing rock with only one individual standing on top right with a battle-axe in his right hand and left hand akimbo. Both the human and the animal are shown solid. But in the case of the ibex, the male organ of which is prominently lengthened, the legs have also been joined in twos and made solid. The animal's body makes a graceful curve. Its tail is short and there is something engraved on its top. The first sign appears to be the letter "*Ku*". The two horns have a noble bend at the upper part and show dentation. The depiction of this animal is more than ordinary. It is not an animal of hunt but an animal conceived of with the highest ritual power.

No. 161 : It represents the simplest development of the time. Here the lower part of the structure has been lengthened, giving the shape of almost a bottle. From its inside grows a stalk-like shaft, which holds tridents at three stages. The lowest two show them on either side while the top has a vertical spike in the middle and two side spikes.

No. 162 : It shows a group of four temples, three of which are bottle-shaped but one in the middle has a wider base. The body of all of them is marked by horizontal lines. The tridents of the right-hand

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No. 184. Thalpan III : Two temples and inscriptions.

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two temples are close to each other and show wavy banners on the top. On the other hand the other two temples have banners flying to left.

No. 163 : It is another small temple of bottle shape with its finial incomplete. The inscription on the left reads *Vaṭakasya*, i.e. "Of Vaṭaka." The smallness of the size suggests that it should be taken as a votive structure.

No. 164 : It shows multiple types of temples, one human in between two temples and another to the right near a bottle-shaped temple. Three of the temples have two-staged rectangular base with a dome, having almost a pointed apex. The dome on the left, has a trident finial and is pecked inside, the secod one is hatched and the extreme right one has double lines with hatchings inside. The fourth temple is the tallest and has conical *śikhara* (temple spire) topped by a trident, from either side of which hangs a banner. The man, in the middle, appears to revere this big temple.

No. 165 : This picture shows a simple three-staged temple, topped by a trident with a flying banner to the left. Two humans are approaching, one on the right is holding a flower vase in hand and the other on the left has bent his body in peculiar pose.

A nearby engraving (not in the picture) shows two temples with trident top and flying banner over a conical *śikhara* (temple spire) but having differences in the lower stage. Two humans are approaching the left temple in reverential mood, the person on the left is having flowers in hand. To the right of the second temple an incomplete human figure is drawn.

No. 166 : There is another variety in the bottle-shaped type of temple. Here the body is divided into four parts. The lowest is square with eight crossed lines within, filled with peckings. The second is a rectangle with diagonals crossed and the space again pecked. The third is a solid trapezoid, and the fourth makes a triangle with peckings, over which rests the trident.

No. 167. It shows a number of temples and unfinshed temple bases. A small bottle-shaped temple is at the left bottom having a tridenl finial

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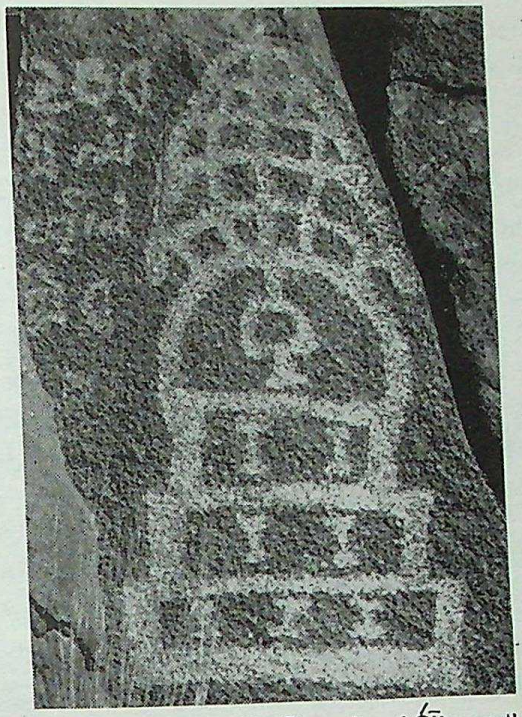
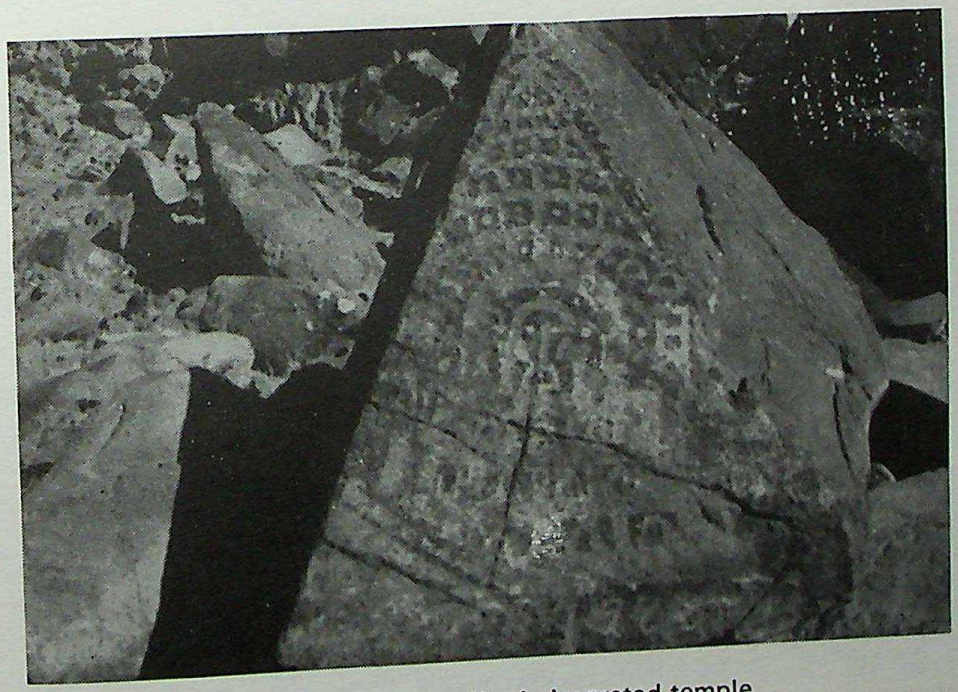


No. 185. Thalpan III : Temple of Śīlamedha.



No. 186. Thalpan III : A decorated temple.

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and trident banner. The second temple on the top has a broad rectangular unit with a trident banner. Two other temples on the right, which are similar, and have their interior hatched but only right-hand one shows dots within. The *śikhara* (temple spire) is conical with trident finial and banner. Both the temples have, on their left side, a flower vase but the right one has an additional representation of a human in the pose of salutation.

No. 168. It shows a hatched type of temple in the middle with two horse riders, one on either side, gallopping their horses towards it. They are holding a sword in their right hand. Both the horses have solid bodies. To the left is an animal, probably an ibex, in outline.

No. 169. It shows two hatched type of temples with four horse riders, a hunter on foot and perhaps a reindeer to left. The reindeer has solid body with horns having several outliers. Two horsemen are intent towards the animal but the footman, who has sword and shield in hands, is marching towards the temple. The other two horsemen over the temples are perhaps turning round.

No. 170. It makes a complicated scene. On the bottom left is a ritual solid battle-axe with dots around the blade. One human, wifh outstretched hands touching the axe on the right while another man is on the top. There are other animals and temples in between. But in the middle bottom there is definitely a human representation standing on two legs but having a body of a circle subdivided by a cross with four dots inside and hands and head crudely shown. Another simple structure on the right, with a human standing by its side. The upper scene shows two more temples and some animals. One animal, which has a thick body, is peculiar, having elephant's trunk.

No. 171. It depicts another life scene. On the top left we have four dotted circles. In the middle top three horsemen have engaged themselves in a play. On the right-hand side a human, with raised hands, is standing before a dotted circle. Below, in the middle, a man stands with upraised hands. On the extreme left there is again a gallopping horse-rider. In the middle there are two temples, one plain and the other hatched. The latter temple has two banners hanging to the right. Below is a man holding a circle.

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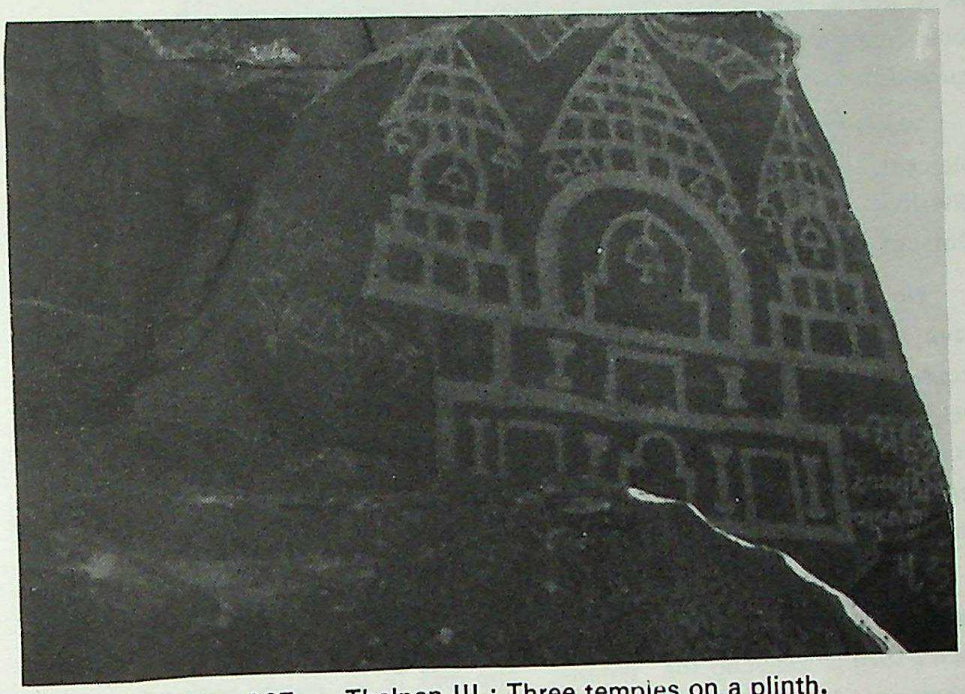

No. 187. Thalpan III : Three tempies on a plinth.

No. 188. Thalpan III : Triple temple.

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No. 172. It shows two types of animals. The one on the right is a horse drawn in outline having a mane on the head. The second one shows elaborate lines at the legs and the body and has dented curved horns, probably suggesting some ritual significance.

No. 173. It presents peculiar symbols with trident as the crowning element. They appear to be several forms of boquets with internal divisions and handles holding tridents either in the middle or on ends. Dots, of course, play their own role in the interspaces.

No 174. It shows several horse riders on the right. Some horses have no riders at all. There are five circles, those at the bottom have crosses within. All the animals have turned their faces to left where we have a number of battle-axes in outline. Such battle-axes are drawn on numerous boulders at Chilas. They have been drawn in different periods and certainly they have had a special meaning to the people here.

No. 175. It shows a series of crude temple structures, mostly of bottle-shape on a broken boulder near the municipal barrier. At one place a man is touching the temple. The rock is so much crushed and broken asunder that some of the carvings have been damaged. But it seems that the sanctity of the site and of the boulder continued to attract the attention of the local people. It is perhaps because of such a sanctity that the crushed stones have not been thrown away. On the other hand some time later a deliberate construction of rubbles and mud was made to hold the boulder together. At what time this later construction was made is difficult to say but the purpose of the construction is quite obvious. Such a construction is so flimsy that it could not have been made for a modern platform to sit for rest. There is no such platform here.

No. 176 : This picture is taken from a boulder in Ziārat site to represent the total symbolic repertoire of these people. Besides ibexes and markhors, we have here, on the left, standing human with outstretched hands. Then come circles with crosses and dots, some of which are rayed. In the middle a man is standing on horseback with a battle-axe in his right hand and a bow in the left, Several battle-axes have also been engraved. But one of them is highly decorated. Its edge side is double lined with short strokes in between, probably indicating flame. The interior of this axe is pecked. The picture is highly instructive and interesting.

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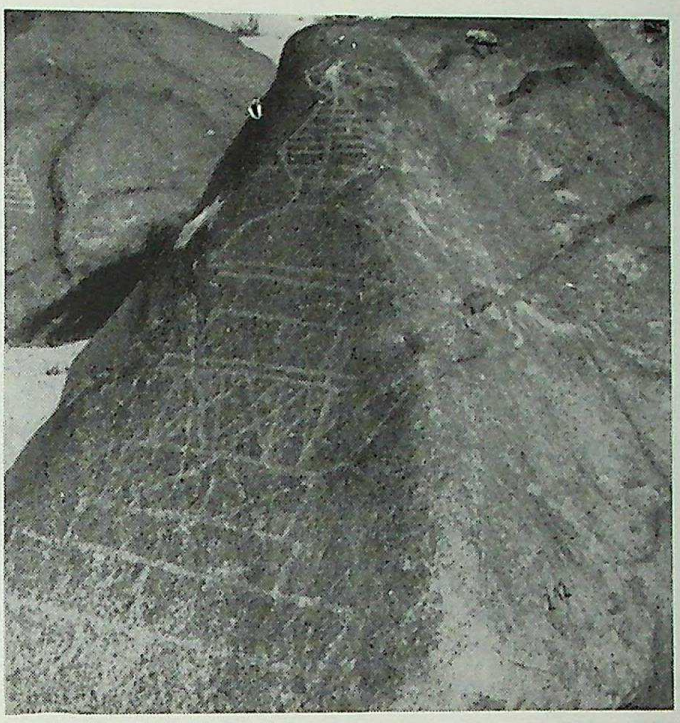
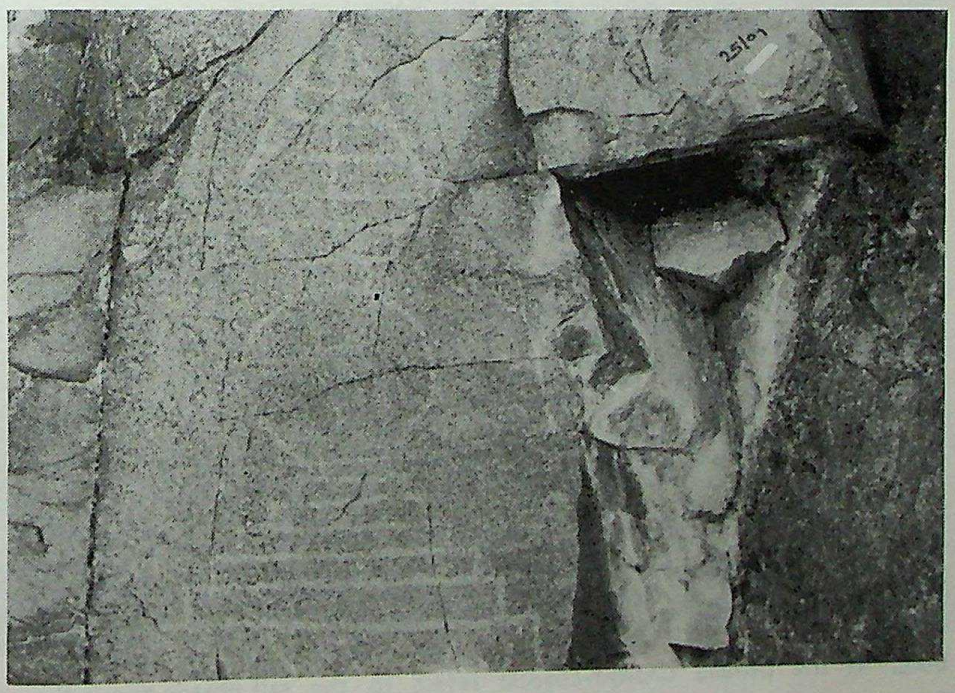


No. 189. Thalpan III : Temple on several terraces.



No. 190. A temple.

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## Śiva and Vishṇu Cults and Temple Forms

We have so far met several types of temples that can be clearly distinguished from the stūpas from the fact that they have trident as their finial while the stūpas have crescent and circle. The only other difference is that the temples show *śikhara* (temple spire) on the top of the main structure while the stūpas have umbrellas. But the way in which the temples are built, clearly indicate that the form is derived from that of the stūpas except the *śikhara* and the trident. Another similarity that is seen is the great veneration in which the temples are held just as the stūpas are venerated by the Buddhists. It is strange that no Hindu god has been figured here in Chilas proper in this late period, except the stone plaque of Vishṇu, (no. 7) obtained from Darel valley. The way in which the temples are worshipped suggests that figural representation of deities either did not play much role or that they were made in sculptures, the one example of which has been noted earlier. On the other hand other evidences prove the existence of other cult objects that became popular at this time.

No. 177 : It is from Thalpan III and shows a wheel on the left and above that is prabably a horned *liṅgaṃ* (phallus). The inscription below reads :

*Vāsudevasya chakraṃ maṇikanaka chaityaku (ṇ)ḍala Vishāma*
*Brāhmaṇasya ṇar-maheśvara*

*i.e.* "Vāsudeva's wheel, be jewelled and golden, ornament of a *chaitya* Nar-Maheśvara of Vishāma Brāhmana."

After this inscription a faint *triśūla* is visible. In the next inscription (no. 178) the name of the Brāhmaṇa is spelt as Vinisāma. To the left of the wheel there is another inscription, reading *Jayesya*, *i.e.* "Of Jaye".

This is the second time that a wheel has been associated with the name of the god Vāsudeva, i.e. Kṛishṇa, whose attribute is a *chakra* (wheel). In an earlier inscription the wheel has been associated with the name of Hari, i.e. Vishṇu, another form of Kṛishṇa. If these two associations can be generalised, most of the wheels or circles may be taken to represent Vaishṇavite cult in Chilas, although other associations are not ruled out. One possibility is that some of them are solar symbols. If the phrase *Chaitya-kuṇḍala* refers to the tall object above the wheel, then it may not be *liṅgaṃ* at all. It may be taken to represent a

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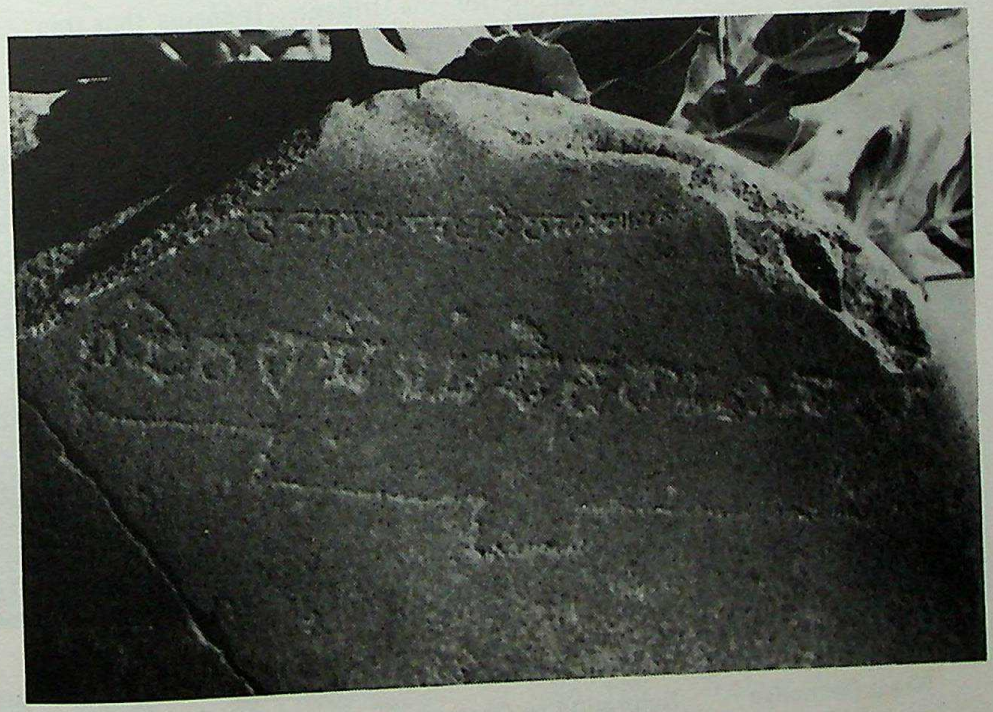
No. 191. Ziārat : Two inscriptions.



No. 192. Thalpan III : two inscriptions.

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Vaishṇavite temple, which was probably adorned with jewels and gold. However, in the next line we have the phrase *Ṇar-Maheśvara* along-with a symbol of *triśūla*. The meaning of the first part *Nar* is not clear, unless, of course, it is connected with the word *ṇri*, *i.e.* a "man", signifying the male concept of Maheśvara. In view of the fact that phallus is rarely represented here, the word *ṇar* may refer to the trident. If this is correct, then it is the trident, rather than phallus, that was the object of worship. The present evidence again shows that Vāsudeva and Śiva were worshipped in symbolic form.

No. 178 : This is also engraved on a rock at Thalpan III. It shows a *triśūla* with a banner on the top and a simple temple at the bottom. The temple has a short line in the sanctum, probably a symbolic representation. The *śikhara* is conical with banner hanging to right from a staff. In between the two there is an inscription in late Brāhmī reading :

*Oṃ Maheśvara Vinisāma Brāhmaṇa (pratishṭhi) ta*
"Om Maheśvara was established by Vinisāma Brāhmaṇa."

It may be noted that here as well as in the previous inscription the word Maheśvara was used probably for the trident. It seems that this Brāhmaṇa was responsible for the popularity of this cult.

No. 179 : It shows two tridents on altars and comes from Thalpan III. The lower one has banners to right and left. But the tridents do not have just prongs. They appear more like the budding petals of a lotus. In that case they may also be taken to be budding lotus, which is another symbol of Vishṇu. The inscription to the right of the top symbol reads :

*Nārānaya Svāmī*. Correctly it should be *Nārāyaṇa Svāmī*, i e. "Lord Nārāyaṇa."

The inscription to the left of the lower symbol reads :

*Rudragupta*, and *Chakradasa*.

These are names of individuals.

No. 180 : The picture shows two inscriptions and a bejewelled conch-shell. The lower inscription in three lines is of earlier date and in a different hand :

| | |
|---|---|
| *Oṃ namo Buddhāya* | i.e. "Om Salutation to the Buddha. |
| *Namo Dharmāya* | Salutation to *Dharma*. |
| *Namo Saṃghāya* | Salutation to monastery." |

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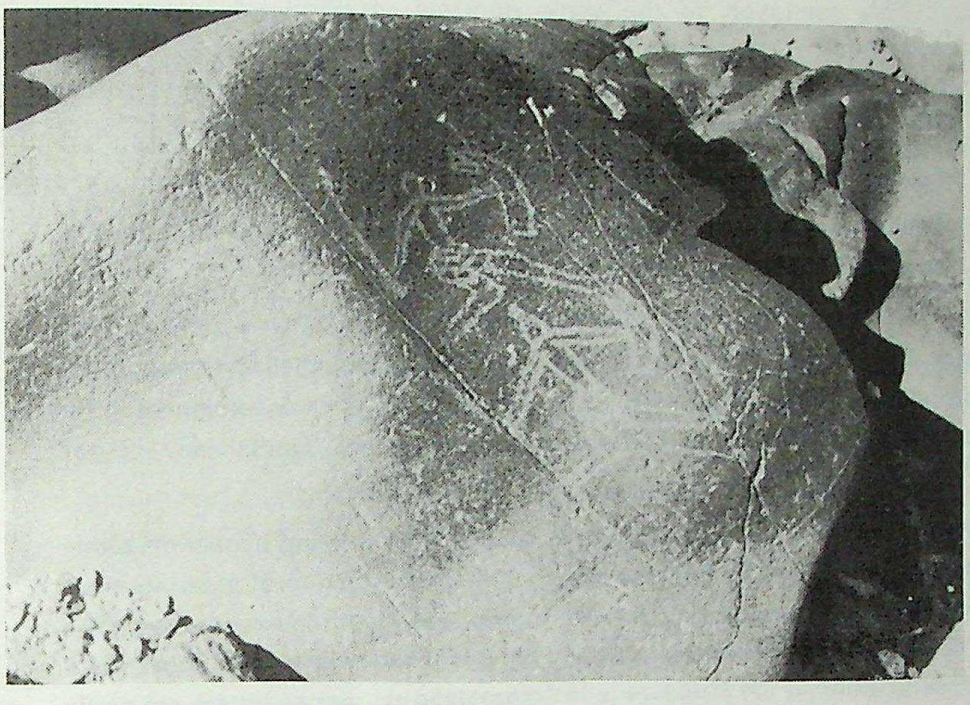
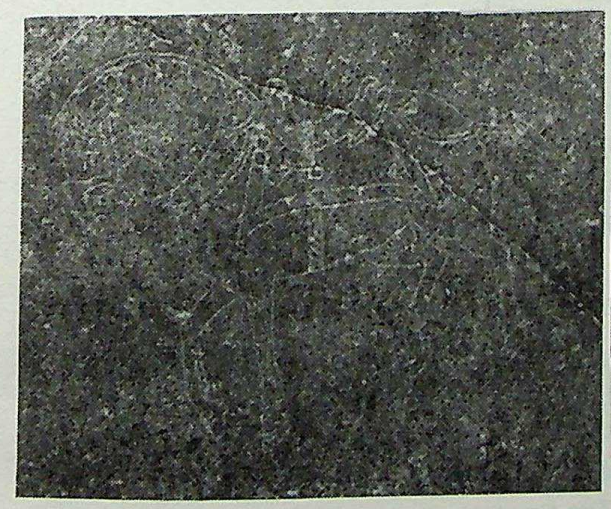
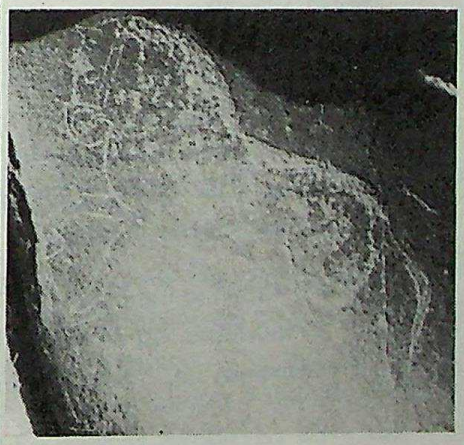


No. 193. Thalpan III : soldiers armed with sword and shield.



No. 194 Thalpan III : A T' ang horse.



No. 195. Thalpan III : another variety of horse.

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This salutation to the triple principle of Buddhism speaks of the earlier time. Later the beautiful conch-shell was engraved. This is one of the attributes of Vishṇu and hence may symbolically represent that god. The inscription on the top is also in the late Brāhmī, reading :

*Śrī Vajraśūrasya*, i.e. "Of Śrī Vajraśūra".

This very name also occurs as a royal personage in a long inscription at Chilas I (see chapter III).

No. 181 : It shows another representation of conch-shell from Thalpan III. The shell has been engraved in an ornamental style integrating floral patterns in its different parts and thus shows a development in the artistic style. This conch-shell may also represent symbolically the god Vishṇu.

No. 182 : It shows a simple trident with a flying banner on either side, installed on the top of a simple temple, consisting of tapering sides and a crowning semi-dome. The interior has five horizontal lines. The inscription in late Brāhmī is continuous and should be continuously read on both sides of the structure. Unfortunately its upper letters are partly damaged. It reads :

*...rava-putra(?) Suloka—*
*Bāṇa Ādivṛi, chhatra-chāmara-dana*
*Bhaga Sīthā-Rāma*

It seems that the last line has the name of the donor spelt as Sīthā Rāma. The word *Bhaga* may be a mistake for *bhakta*, i.e. "a devotee". The gift is of umbrella and fly-whisk, as is mentioned in the last part of the second line. The earlier portion contains the names of father and son, which is not clearly readable.

Another drawing shows two simple temples in outline to the right, a mounted horseman to the left and an inscription on the top reading *Brāhmaṇasya*, i.e. "Of Brāhmaṇa."

No. 183 : It shows another type of a temple with a bulging dome resting on four receding terraces. The finial consists of a faint trident on the top of a staff with flying banner to right. The inscription below reads :

*Oṃ devadharmoyaṃ Lasamaṇadevasya*

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i.e. "Oṃ. (This) is the divine *dharma* of Laṣamaṇa (or correctly Lakshmaṇa) deva."

There is another temple coming closer to the previous example. In this case we have two series of three terraces with an interval of a torus moulding, on which sits a dome not so carefully drawn. The staff on its top carries a trident but no banner. The inscription below in developed Brāhmī, almost proto-nāgarī, reads :

*Lidapa la (sya)*, i.e. "Of Liḍapāla."

No. 184 : It shows two examples of temples with two inscriptions in late Brāhmī. The temple on the left is bigger and is decorated with flying banners and bells below the trident finial. The base consists of two terraces, the lower one being decorated by crossed lines. The third stage has thick lines on the top and below and two pillars on each of its sides, with a three-fourth dome on its top. It has also a tapering *harmikā* (relic chamber) and one strut on each side supporting five thick umbrellas, topped by a triangular *Sikhara* and trident finial. The other smaller building has three terraces, a torus moulding supporting a semi-circular dome, crowned by a *harmika* with side struts supporting only fwo umbrellas, represented by thick bands, and the finial consists of a small conical *Śikhara* having *kalaśa* (jar) and faint trident. The inscription in the late Brahmi reads :

*Gabhehasya*. i.e. "Of Gabheha."

And *Devadharmoyaṃ*.
*Mahuvachasya*.

i.e. "(This) is the divine *dharma* of Mahuvacha (correctly Madhu-vacha, meaning 'Sweet-voiced')."

No. 185 : It shows another development in the temple type. Here the semi-dome, which encloses a pedestalled pot, rests on three receding tiers, each one of which is decorated with columns. On the top of the dome the conical *Śikhara* (temple spire), which has a trident on its top, Is decorated with a series of curved horizontals, broken by verticals. The inscription on the left reads :

*Devadharmoyaṃ Śīlamedha (sya)*

i.e. "(This) is the divine *dharma* of Śīlamedha."

No. 186 : It shows a more complicated type of temple with an

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indistinct inscription at the bottom. The dome in the middle, which encloses a trefoil arch, having a bell inside hanging from its apex, stands on double decorated terrace and has a highly decorated conical *Śikhara* (temple spire), topped by an *āmalaka* (a kind of fruit) shade ending in a trident. The *Śikhara* has small subdivision. each of them having dots within. This is the most elaborate temple type seen here.

No. 187 : It shows three temples on a common base, the central one bigger than the side ones. The two receding terraces are decorated by pillars and rectangular niches, the lowest having two niches and an additional central arched niche. The dome of the central temple rests directly on the base and encloses a trefoil arch and has a *Śikhara* with banners of the same type as seen in no. 185. The side temples are alike but have extra double base. They all have trident finial. The inscription on the left in developed Brāhmī reads *Vapata* and *Punyavrata*. They are names of persons. The inscription on the right reads :

*Nomo tribhu (nāthāya)*
*Devadharmoyam*
*Śuṇaṇḍā*
*mṛi (ta) sya*

"Salutation (to the lord of the) three worlds. (This) is the divine gift of Śuṇaṇḍāmṛita."

The name Śuṇaṇḍāmṛita compares very well wifh the name Vṛiḷaṇḍā mṛita occurring in the inscriptions at Hodur (see above). Could this person be taken to belong to the same family ?

No. 188. This is another variety of triple temple from Thalpan. The temples are on a common base. But in the present example the central tempe, which is bigger, has additional two bases and a sanctum over which rests directly the conical *śikhara*. The side temples have their *śikharas* on a sanctum enclosing an arched niche in the shape of a bowl-on-stand.

No. 189. This picture introduces another development of the temple spire, in which the semi-dome rests on a series of receding tiers. Here the *harmikā* (relic chamber) is disposed off but the *śikhara*, which is topped by a trident, has a wider waist and is decorated by a series of horizontal lines across a central vertical.

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No. 190. It shows the dome resting on a series of receding tiers with the *śikhara* gradually curving to a point on the top and having horizontal lines across the central rib in the interior. This is the stylised development of the earlier type at Thalpan.

No. 66. Much later an adoption of the above type is seen at the Gondophares Rock near the mouth of Buṭogāh. In this case the dome is very small within the *śikhara* resting directly on receding tiers. The *śikhara*. which is curving to a point at the top, is marked by horizontal lines. The small dome may be a symbol of an image.

No. 67. Very close to the last temple is a series of inscriptions in the mediaeval character of 14th or 15th century A.D. Five of these names have been noted in chapter III. There are more names on a nearby rock. They read :

*Kapaka, Śrī Sayata, Mahāratha...*

Obviously these late writings and the above temple belong to the same period and they attest the continuation of this old community to this time at this site. How long more they survived in this region is difficult to say. From the point of view of chronology these are the last records so far discovered.

No. 191. These are two rock inscriptions from Thakot (Ziārat). They clearly attest the prevalence of the Hindu religion from eighth century A.D. onwards. They read :

*Divira mahāprabhu darapati*

i.e. "*Darapati* (literally "a lord of *dara*" (probably *dvāra*, meaning an entrance), the great god of the temple." Here the title *Darapati* may refer to Śiva as he is the lord of the mountains. A later inscription in another hand reads :

*Śrī Parameśvara*, i.e. "the glorious and great god".

The title *Parameśvara* is also applied to Śiva.

No. 192. This rock has also two inscriptions. The upper one reads :

*Oṃ Kuvaravāhanasya Śrī Vipradata* . i.e. "Of Kuvaravahana Śrī Vipradata.....".

The remaining letters a,e very small and illegible This writing is in an

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earlier hand. The name of this man is known also from Chilas I (plate 9). The lower writing is of a later date. It reads :

*Oṃ Devadharmoyaṃ Devadhāraṇasya*

"(This) is the divine *dharma* of Devadhāraṇa."

## Conclusion

A rich variety of material has been presented above to throw light on the nature of the people who introduced horses and a new system of horse riding and fighting not only in Chilas but in the greater part of the Karakorum Region. In due course of time thair culture appears to have spread far and wide Their chief symbol battle-axe was a weapon for fighting. This weapon is known to have continued in Chilas right upto modern time. being replaced today by machine-made axes imported from the plains country. The information from Mr. Abdul Hamid Khawar (No. 3), a retired Assistant Inspector-General of Police, a keen student of history and antiquity, enlightens us. According to him such axes were used for ceremonial purposes during marriage time right upto his early days. It is, therefore, no wonder that these axes appear to have occupied greater place in the local people than any other object. Although such axes have been occasionally found as far as Hunza, yet the life of the Burushaskhi people in Hunza was more dominated by the presence of ibexes and markhors. Such ibexes have also been found here. In fact a new development in the ibex form is seen here, in which the animal is represented in a ritual form (plate 12). Yet the ibex does not appear to have assumed here a place as a cult object as it did in the life of the Hunza people. It is the battle-axe that grows into a fetish here. It will not be wrong to say that as the local culture of Hunza was distinguished by ibex, here it is the battle-axe that became the focus of life from the beginning of eighth century A.D. onward. Hence we have adopted the nomenclature of Battle-Axe Culture.

The association of circles or wheels of various types having segmented parts within, spokes and dots, concentric small circles within, radiating curves within, indications of rays outside or by triangles at the inner side, or enclosing single cross with dots with horsemen is beyond doubt as they are not only touching them, holding them but also revering them in various ways. These circles are no doubt symbolic, if the evidence of two inscriptions can be generalised, they represent Vāsudeva or Hari. Incidentally the earlier figure of Vasudeva at Chilas II also holds a *chakra* (wheel) in one of his hands. But the wheels in the present

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carvings are not derived from the older representation. They are certainly new introduction by these people who had little care for the older stupas as it is upon them that these circles have been engraved. Whether they also signify solar symbol or not is difficult to say as there is no epigraphic or iconographic evidence so far available to prove this. It seems that these wheels lost their original meaning in due course of time and they continued to be engraved on several boulders in haphazard and clumsy fashion as if they had acquired amuletic significance It is in this sense that they are found all over Chilas and on boulders seen in the different rivulets that flow in the vicinity of Chilas.

The third important feature that appears at this time is the development of a temple type on the basis of the older form of terraced stupas. Whether these people imported this type from outside is not clear but it seems that the temple type was introduced by Brahmins whose names occur in the inscriptions. This Brāhmaṇic activity appears to have exerted great influence on the local people as they very soon adopted this form in their crude structural engravings. Although inscriptions call them *divira* and *maheśvara*, yet the Brāhmaṇic influence did not wipe out local belief completely. In fact the form of the temple structure is so subtly developed from the stūpa form that sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the two. The main difference noted has been the trident finial in the case of temles and crescent and circle in the case of the stūpas. However, it must be noted that sometimes a confusion is created. Probably in the eyes of the local people the difference did not matter much at least in the later perlod. On the other hand the way in which these structural engravings are held in veneration suggest that the idea is borrowed from the older practice of stūpa worship. Probably the Brahmins did not mind integrating the older Buddhist practice into their new religious style. Trident certainly became a dominant feature in the local artistic expression. Whether local people remembered Maheśvara or not is difficult to say. If at all Śaivite religion spread here, its form was more seen in its *triśūla* (trident) representation. Two other symbols are occasionally seen in the carvings :one is of *liṅga* (phallus)and the second is of *Śaṅkha* (conch-shell). The first is again associated with Śiva and the second with Vishṇu. They do not appear to have attracted much attention as their engravings are few and far between. Another remarkable feature is that so far no figural representation of these Hindu deities, except in the early period, have been found

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in the carvings at Chilas, although Buddhas and Bodhisattvas even of a later period are known. It may be that the Hindu symbols played greater role than the idols. Or it may be that these deities were made in metals or in some other material, one of which has been found in Darel valley. In any case the present evidence is instructive and that points to the popularisation of the higher form of Hindu religion in symbolic way so that the local religious beliefs and practices could be easily integrated and brought in line with the developments in the neighbouring regions.

As far as writing is concerned, it seems they were originally introduced in the form of Gupta Brāhmī of the fifth century A.D. by the Buddhist missionaries, as is also in the case of the Huns who adopted this writing in their inscriptions. This Brāhmī alphabet maintained its character for nearly two centuries without much change. What has been called proto-Śāradā by some scholars, is actully a late development of Brāhmī here, which survived without being much influenced from the southern regions. Later again the Brahmins continued the same changes that were noted in mid-India.. The forms, which are later seen, are not Śāradā at all but a development in the local Brāhmī into new shapes parallel to the proto-nāgarī development in mid-India. It seems that the palaeography of this region had its own history of development and did not follow the course that is found in the regions of Gandhara and Kashmir. Probably it is for this reason that Hiuen Tsang speaks of the local script being the same as in mid-India.

If the archaeological evidence is to be relied upon, it seems that the introduction of the higher forms of Buddhism, or as a matter of fact, of Hinduism at this time, was a work of missionary activities from outside. But very soon they were integrated into local beliefs and practices. Whether there was any large movement of population is difficult to say because the kings assumed Sanskritic names and titles, who are clearly distinguished from the names of the local people as recorded in some inscriptions. It is, however, quite clear that a new type of battle-axe and a new system of horse-riding were introduced sometime in the 8th century A.D. Whether they were brought by the kings who used Sanskritic names, or were the hall-marks of a new movement of population is difficult to say. In any case they were adopted by the local people and they became their chief distinguishing features. Wherever they went,. they rode on horses, hunted on horseback, and also played

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on horseback. The other weapon, which is special with them, is the curved type of sword, which they often carried at their waist and also used them for fighting. The memorable scene of a sword dance at one place and various types of plays that they exhibit by standing on horses make them men of the horse. Certainly horses are also seen at the earlier carvings at Chilas II but the dexterity displayed in horsemanship in the present examples is entirely different.

As no excavation of any site has so far been conducted, it is impossible to talk about any other feature of life. But it is generally believed that they practised cremation burial. If the evidence from the neighbouring valley of Darel could be generalised, we can say that such cremated bones were deposited in urns and then these urns were buried inside grave pits, specially dug for this purpose. As these people survived long at least in their rock art, it will not be unreasonable to see in them the association of the Shiṇā people who have dominated for long as landowners in this part. But whether they came at this time or they adopted this culture from outside is difficult to say. In any case they appear to have imbibed this culture and made it their own. It is possible that those who did not adopt this culture continued in their traditional way and remained distinguished from the new widely spreading culture. It is on such an assumption that we can explain the common language of Shiṇā being spoken by all the people here and yet make a distinction on the basis of cultural difference. Both these groups of people were certainly dislinguished from the earlier hunters who continued their primitive life and expressed themselves in the primitive style of art on the rocks.

Thus the Battle-Axe people, whatever may be their name, introduced a period of history that has a great bearing on the understanding of the Shiṇā people who now dominate here. The history of the present people can be stretched back and understood in the background of these daring horseriders.

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# CHAPTER VII

## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE OLD PILGRIMS

For the visitors coming from the east and proceeding to Gandhāra or southward to the Indus plains, or vice-versa, Chilas area offered the bracing atmosphere of a resting place on the Indus. After crossing precipitous and often dangerous pathways over difficult mountains, they could now find a breathing space in the limited open plain on the Indus and have a peaceful repose by the side of the murmering Indus water. It is therefore no wonder that from remote past several routes through river valleys led from the northern passes southward into Chilas zone, and thus the neighbourhood of Chilas proper became a rendezvous of travellers—monks, missionaries and pilgrims alike—who have left their indelible impressions on the boulders over which they tread in search of humanity's road to peace and tranquility. The path along which they travelled was pressed and sunk by the burden of their feet and very often they cut and flattened the rude rocks that intruded in their way. It is these broken stone bits, sliced rocks and rolled boulders that point to the traces of old path which man endeavoured to carve out for his safe journey. For a long distance such a path is seen in the Kargāh valley near Gilgit, which leads to the remains of an entire village sheltered in a cave higher up. Onward the path goes to the top of the hill, where the figure of the famous Buddha is sculptured at a height. Still further the path leads to the Sai valley, accessible from Janglot, where a standing

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figure of the Buddha is still concealed underground, for fear of destruction, at the bottom of a large hillock supporting a command fort for the whole valley. The fort has its own history of successive reconstructions on one or the other part of the hillock as the old village itself had been shifting from time to time. It is here that the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang rested for a while. How he proceeded back to Taxila, he does not give the detail. But one possible route is through the Khinnar valley over to Chilas and onward to Babusar pass and final push through Kaghan valley towards Mansehra and Taxila The Indus can be crossed at several points in the Chilas zone but it is in the vicinity of Chilas proper, where the Thalpan bridge is now built, that there has been a traditional crossing from remote past. It is here that on either side of the Indus river rock carvings abound and they present to us the little carved memorials of old on stones that these travellers left behind as a mark of their visit.

The pilgrim path is on both sides of the river for some distance and then it follows the passage depending upon the hill precipice along the Indus river. It is possible to trace this path from Thalpan to Hodur along the right bank of the river as the path emerges from the Khinnar valley and turns on to the sandy bed of the Thalpan plain. There is a large concentration of carvings and inscriptions on the eastern bank of the Khinnar *nala*. That makes a story by itself. But for the time, as we leave the murmering sound of the Khinnar water behind, and come up to its western bank where an old path has been washed away, we reach a group of black boulders, all hustling together in a pile. On several of them there are engravings of prehistoric people and also of the temple carvers.

The prehistoric carvings consist of a palm impression on the easternmost rock, then a primitive man running behind an animal throwing stones at it, Next we see simple bottle-shaped temples crowned by *triśūla* finial, another late drawing of standing primitive man with upraised hands, three horn-headed symbol and a mounted horseman holding bow and arrow before a little *triśūla*-topped temple. The temple has three receding tiers with a dome and a supporting staff ending in a *triśūla* finial and banners only on one side. Then comes another bottle-shaped temple with late Brāhmī inscription, reading *Brāhmaṇasya, i.e.* "Of Brāhmaṇa." Finally on the extreme right we have two advancing soldiers (no. 193) with loin cloth tied at the waist and armed with sword and shield. They are in the attacking mood. A second

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big boulder, inclined towards the *nala*, has an inscription in late Brahmi, reading :

*Revatiśarmaṇasya*, *i.e.* "Of Revatiśarmaṇa." The third group of boulders still on the river side have carvings of simple temples on five of them, and some have hunting scenes. On one rock four standing humans are shooting at markhors. On another boulder we have two mounted horsemen. On its other face there is a single markhor. This rock pile has a concentration of markhor carvings.

As we rise higher up on to the pilgrim path, we witness the Thalpan plain spreading west of the Khinnar *nala* (plate 5). At the foot of the hill are old demarcations of fields. At a distance the Khinnar winds down and joins the Indus. At the junction, on its either side, are little hillocks full of carvings and inscriptions. The modern village path traverses the sandy plain. In this plain there are several boulders carved with stūpas, temples, mounted horsemen, ibexes and other animals and inscriptions. On one of them some stūpas have been engraved on the right and a Chinese inscription of two symbols on the left. Just close to the bottom of the hill we see the stone walls and some Muslim graves of the abandoned Thalpan village. This abandonment appears to have been caused by torrential flood in the past when the plain was strewn over with sand and the hill slope washed down. As we look down from the eastern height, we witness a great erosion of the hill by some torrent in the past. The erosion has hurled down big boulders into the plain. Hence no rock is available for carving here. But at one place there is a factory site for working quartz flakes. Such flakes can be picked up all over the hill slope.

We cross the eroded portion and come to the next height of the hill where we see a circular hollow made by nature. It is like a circular cavity in the rock, large enough to accommodate some engravers to leave their carvings on the innerside of the rim. Within this rim there is an unfinished base of a stūpa. On its left is a terraced stūpa. Still to the left is the Gandhāran type of an unfinished Buddha, the like of which have been noted earlier (Nos. 108 and 109). These two are seen further down the hill on two separate boulders. The present example has his hands unfinished, drapery covering both the shoulders with a triangular ring around the neck and folds falling over the knees, eyes half-closed and chin small. *Ushṇīsha* (top knot) is on the head but the hair is not

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profusely shown. The halo, of a single line, is around the head only. The ears are distented.

As we walk ahead, we meet with several carved temples on way. Onward a circle is seen, then a temple structure standing on two terraces and having a crude *śikhara*. Next is a triple temple on a plinth (no. 187), described in chapter VI. On a lower level is a single temple (no. 185) of Śīlamedha. Still lower down an unfinished temple in outline, and further ahead a triple base with a dome ending in a triple arch. We climb down further and see a broken boulder having a stūpa resting on three tiers. Going further ahead, we have a good example of a temple having a *śikhara* with bell attachments, an unfinished structure on the left and three unfinished ones a little below on the right. Another boulder, rolled down from top. has an unfinished carving, meant for representing seated Buddha. But this example differs from the one in Chilas II in so far as the present carving does not close the shoulder below the head to appear like a stūpa. Further ahead is another temple on a triple base. Then we come to a beautiful temple on six terraces with its semi-dome, *harmikā* and *śikhara*, all forming a continuous construction. Particularly the *śikhara* has a tapering spire with parallel lines inside, almost a prototype of the temple of the madiaeval period (no. 66). But in the present case we have a lion capital, one each on either side. The inscription on the left is given in no. 61. On a higher level we see a big stūpa with a dome resting on four tiers.

We then pass a second erosion of the hill side. On one boulder we have a beautiful stūpa resting on four tiers having five umbrellas supported by side struts. This is the stūpa of Dharmapriya according to an inscription. Another boulder shows a peculiar temple on three terraces and three semi-domes, one on the top of the other, each containing several dots. Then we come to the carving of Vinisama Brahmana (no. 178). After some more temples we come to a boulder showing a handsome elephant on the left with a name in Brāhmī *Śrī Vichitra*, and a duck on the right with an inscription, reading *Oṃ vicharati vaṭakasa*, i.e. "OṂ. "The duck moves about". On a nearby boulder we have a domical structure on two terraces. Then we come to the engraving of a lotus on altar (no. 179) with inscriptions, already described.

We come now to a third erosion which has floated down a heap of boulders in the plain below. One of them has a temple (*divira*) of Jīvadharma. Then we come to a stūpa with an inscription affirming

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faith in the triple formula of Buddhism. Another inscription nearby reads : *Vimalasenasya dhamadana*, i.e. "A religious gift of Vimalasena." Further down at the foot of the hill there is a pile of boulders showing a big stūpa on five terraces topped over by a crescent and a circle on a long staff. Still above there is an inscription in the developed Brāhmī of 9th century A.D. reading :

*Śubhra sāgara*
*Paradāravarhita*
*Vinītasvabhāva*
*Sumitra-paksha*
*Parameśva (ra)*

*Transiation*

"The great lord (having qualities of) a clear sea (i.e.water), avoiding other's wife, humble by nature and partial to good friends." Who is this *Parameśvara* is not clearly stated unless, of course, it refers to Śiva.

On the top there are two more stūpas of similar type with an inscription—*Rudraguptasya*, i.e. "Of Rudragupta." Still above is an unfinished figure of the Buddha, contained within a trefoil halo. His one hand is in the *abhaya* (fearlessness) pose and the other is holding the hem of the garment. Still further there is a beautiful temple with its dome resting on four receding tiers and finial consisting of a *triśūla*, from which hangs down a banner. After a series of temples we come to a remarkable structure by the side of a small votive temple. The structure has a domical body resting on a base. On its top is an abacus, probably meant for an altar, on which rests a semi-dome to serve as a sanctum And again we have a domical cover. Further ahead is the representation of a devotee with his folded hands in worshipful pose. Next we come to a place where we have four stūpas, the left two being incomplete. The right two are complete with an inscription on top, reading *Namo Buddhāya*, i.e. "Salutation to the Buddha." The stūpas have a series of tiers, dome, *harmikā* and umbrella in a triangular form with flying banners. Several more stūpas follow on way, some having short inscriptions. Still further we come to a place where a long inscription (see chapter V) praising the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is engraved. After passing through a number of structural engravings we come to a place where we have four names written in the mediaeval handwriting :

*Chitrasiṃgha*, *Chashisiṃgha*, *Kirīṇa* and *Palida*.

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These names are similar to those which occur near the long inscription of the Śūra family at Chilas I (see Chapter III).

Further ahead we get the following three line inscription in evolved Brāhmī :

*Om namo (prati) shṭhita dharmarājāya tathāgatāya*
*namo sadguruviśvāṅgata-Śrī-kṛipā (ni) dhāya tathāga—*
*tāya namo karuṇasya (karaya) tathāgatāya*

*Translation*

"Oṃ, Salutation to the established king of *dharma*, the Buddha, Salutation to the great teacher, the receptacle of kindness encompassing the whole earth, the Buddha, Salutation to the Buddha, (the bestower of compassion."

On one boulder along this path there is a representation of a beautiful horse (no. 196), unsaddled but having a bridle. The legs, tail and head are in a posture showing the horse in a prancing mood. The body of the horse is pecked. It recalls the type known from China in the T'ang period. A second representation of a horse (no. 194) on the flat surface of a rock near Thalpan II shows the trotting horse fully caparisoned and decorated. The noble lines of its body, the gentle curve of the neck and muscles are all drawn in a realistic fashion. These two horses represent an entirely different type from the horses seen earlier. They appear to be works of foreign artists. There is a third horse, copying no. 95, but not so well drawn. Nearby is a palm impression.

As we proceed westward along the foot of the hill, we see a beautiful carving (no. 111) of the Dhyāni Buddha seated under a tree. Further ahead are two more inscriptions in developed Brāhmī recording the names of two Bodhisattvas thus :

*Om namo Virochana-tathāgatāya*, i.e. "Oṃ. Salutation to tathāgata (in the form of) Virochana."

*Namo prajñāpāramitāya*, i.e. "Salutation to Prajñāpāramitā."

Still further is a pitiful, carving of a goat in outline bitten by a snake at the right hind leg. Further ahead we come to a place higher up along the pilgrim path and see several crude stūpas and temples drawn on a rock by the side of a room, shown in simple lines, within which is placed a bed. Is this bed connected with some story of the Buddha? If it is so, it may represent his *nirvāṇa*. At several places on the rocks we find a series of small cavities arranged in some order. One of them is having

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thirty such holes, arranged six in vertical row and five in horizontal row. At several places we get a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* (lucky jar) full of flowers. One of them has an inscription reading :

*Oṃ Śrī sampūrṇāditya-nandinā*

i.e. "Oṃ. the glorious joy of a complete *aditya* (sun-lotus)."

There is also a stūpa erected by pot-makers as an inscription below it attests :

*Oṃ namo Buddhāya kumbhakārasya*

i.e. "Oṃ. Salutation to the Buddha of pot-maker (s)."

Further ahead is the pile of the "Altar RocK", already described in earlier chapters. On the surface of one nearby rock we have two rows of crude simple stūpas (or temples), six on the top row and four below. The purpose of erecting them in rows is not very clear. Right above this "Altar Rock" the pilgrim path pssses by a boulder on the top of the hill, which has been deeply patinated. It bears impressions of palm and foot (described in chapter II).

The path follows westward and crosses several dry beds of *nalas*. A second steep passage from the "Altar Rock" joins now directly with this path. This was an old passage that led to the abandoned village of Thakot to the north of Ziārat site. Where this passage ends, there is a big boulder serving as a rock shelter to the shepherds that pass nearby. Near this big rock there are several carvings. We first get a simple later horse with its tail upward, Another boulder has a simple stūpa under a modern writing. To the left of the path there are two simple stūpas right on the top surface, one horse-rider and a lotus. A nearby boulder has two terraced stūpas, one plinth and one human. On the other face of this very rock there is a hunting scene. There are two markhors on the left facing each other. One man is shooting at the ibexes, which are five in number, Another big ibex is on the top. In the middle a circle is drawn around an ibex. Two men, one on top and another on right, are in the act of catching the ibexes alive. There are more boulders with carvings of animals. Another boulder has a simple stūpa and two ibexes. Three Brāhmi inscriptions of 5th, 6th and 7th centuries respectively read *Dharmasena*, Priya *Vishṇu, and Devadharmoyam*. The first writing shows triangular headmark in the forms of the letters. Another boulder has an inscription of 5th century A.D., reading :

*Āyoṭakasya Śrī Prakiditi* (?) *i.e.* "Of Āyoṭaka Śrī Prakiditi" Right on the

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foot-path is a Kushāṇa Kharoshṭhi inscription, reading *Dasasa*, i e. "Of Dāsa". Below is a dim archaic man and an ibex. Another boulder ahead shows a horseman, ibexes and a man holding an animal in his right-stretched hand. Nearby there is a concentration of black coloured stones bearing several carvings : an inscription of fifth century A.D reading Śrī Vipakshamaka; three simple asses, one human, ibexes, and another fifth century writing, reading *Śrī, Ravaṇa* ; a hunter shooting at an ibex. Below the ibex a word reads *Vaka* in 8th century writing and among other inscriptions we have the important inscription of *Divira Mahaprābhu* (no. 191). Another rock has two solid foot-prints of the left foot in the archaic style. Further ahead we have a stūpa and two temples. Then we have the following inscription in 5th century writing :

*Jīvaka Chandramāna Kiṇīvasya dhama*

*i.e.* "The *dharma* (*dāna, i e.* gift) of Kiṇīva Jīvaka Chandramāna." Another inscription below reads *Dharmapriya Phahikena, i.e.* "By Phahika, beloved of *Dharma.*" There is another big boulder having two inscriptions in the 5th century writing, some letters showing triangular head-mark :

On top : Śrī Śrī Chandravarmaṇaḥ.

On bottom : Dharmaghosha-dana puṇyārtha.

The first is just a name while the second means "The gift of Dharmaghosha (for) the attainment of merit."

On top surface of this big boulder there are several stūpas, rows of ibexes, markhor, serpent and a human in long coat. On the eastern face a name is written *Jayachandradivakara.* Another small boulder has *Jīvachandra* in the 5th century writing. One rock shows a beautiful sheep with curved dented horns. Then we come to a big boulder showing the cultural milieu of the Battle-Axe people (already described in chapter VI). Several more boulders come in between, bearing carvings and inscriptions and finally we reach the site of Ziārat I.

To the south of the Muslim grave there are several boulders on the edge of the higher terrace. Two of them bear prehistoric carvings (already described in chapter II). One boulder has archaic carvings below later stūpas and the second has two faces. It is on the western face of the second rock that we have the so-called "River-god". To the right a boulder has a late Brāhmī inscription. giving the name of *Losarldeva* and another has *Budivīra.*

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We cross another dry *nala* and come to a boulder having an inscription, reading *Balavīra* in 8th century writing. Another inscription below an engraving of a man riding on a peculiar horse, reading *Vijaya vari* (probably *vahi*), i.e. "conquest of vari or vahi." This type of inscription is seen at the Sacred Rock of Hunza (see chapter II). We cross another *Dās* and come to a stone engraved with a standing human and a later inscription, reading *Brāhmaṇasya*, i.e. "Of Brāhmaṇa." Then we reach the site of Ziārat II. Here we have numerous prehistoric carvings (see chapter II). It is here that we have the Central Asian devotee worshipping a stūpa (plate 10).

After crossing another dry *nala* we come to a small boulder bearing a late Brāhmī inscription, reading *Chandravarmasya*, i.e. "Of Chandravarma." Another dry *nala* is crossed and we come to a place where a horse-rider is engraved in archaic style. A series of boulders show late carvings of standing human, solar symbol, markhors, ibexes and horses. Another dry *nala* is crossed and we come to two old graves covered by small pebbles. Not far from this place are the boulders, engraved with circles, one human touching a circle, mounted horsemen, eagle and earlier palm prints. A small boulder has a Sogdian inscription written from top to bottom associated with a late stūpa. Other boulders have late Brāhmī inscriptions, reading :

*Devadharmoyaṃ Vṛiṇeṇa*, i.e. "This is the divine *dharma* (made) by Vṛiṇa."

The name *Kuverasena* is written twice. And finally we have *Om Vanavurena*.

We then descend to the lowest terrace of the Indus river, where we have a historical period cave made by the weathering of the cemented gravel of the older terrace. Actually there are two caves, a bigger one and a smaller one. Both of them have been chiselled from inside probably by the Buddhists. In front of the cave there is flat rock bearing carvings of horsemen, ibexes, circles and temples. Inside the big cave a lone Brāhmī word in 6th century writing reads *Śrī*. The smaller cave has no inscription. On a boulder immediately above the cave a late inscription of 6th century reads :

*Kuladīva Kulakāgaputra*, i.e. "Kuladīva, son of Kulakāga.

After crossing another dry *nala* we come to two boulders, one of

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them has a stūpa and another has an inscription in 6th century writing, reading ;

*Namo Buddhāya*
*Kṛishṇadevasya*

i.e. "Salutation to the Buddha of Kṛishṇadeva."

Then we get a prancing horse facing right.

Further we get a late inscription reading *Vashama*, and still further a stūpa topped by crescent. Another late inscription reads : *Śrī Prajāpadisya Paradharmena kara*, i.e, "The work by Paradharma of Śrī Prajāpati."

One small rock, at the edge of the dry bed, has a hunting scene, in which a man is shooting at a solid rhinceros. One inscription reads :

*Kurajaya-putra*

*Devapā (l a)* i.e. "Devapala, son of Kurajaya.

Then comes a place where we have a temple (no. 55) and several inscriptions (discussed in chapter III). Further ahead we have an opening, showing carved boulders. On a boulder the inscription reads : On top : *Śrī Rāma-Vishṇusya*, i.e. "Of Śrī Rāma Vishṇu.

On bottom. *Śrī Laḍidasya*, i.e.. "Of Śrī Ladida".

On a flat rock an inscription in Kushāṇa Kharoshṭhī gives the name *Daika*. Nearby there is a Sogdian inscription in four lines. Then we get a second Kharoshṭhī of the same time, reading *Miśokasa*, i.e., "Of Miśoka". Another inscription of the 5th century reads. *Śrī Indravishṇa (u) sya*, i.e., "Of Indravishṇu".

On the right a three-line Brāhmī inscription reads :

*Oṃ namo vato Buddhāya*

*sarvasatvahitāya sarvalokāya*

*satya-sthita siddhāya Vṛiśyasya*

**Translation**

"Oṃ. Salutation to the revered Buddha, for the good of all the beings, for all the worlds, of Vṛiśya, the accomplished (and) firm in faith".

A late Brāhmī inscription reads *Śrī Rāmaśrutasya*.

After crossing another dry *nala* we come to a place right opposite

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Chilas II where we have a beautiful stūpa on a washed rock and inscription in 5th century writing, reading.

*KulaJaya*
*Bhadrila*
*Ādisomo Viprah*
and *Śrī Sudamachandra rājā*

Another late writing gives the reading. *Kṛiti kashṭa jaya* probably meaning "Victory of Kṛiti-kashṭa.

Further ahead on a boulder close to the hill before the entrance of Khomar site we have a late hunting scene in which a dog is running after ân ibex but the man is standing. Below we have three ibexes in outline. Still further we have a temple, consisting of a tall base, a sanctum and a triangular *śikhara* with a finial. To the right of the temple an inscription reads :

*Oṃ devadharmo kṛitam*
*Oṃ Vayatraṇamotrarikena kritosya*

i.e., "Oṃ. This is the divine gift made. Oṃ. This is the work made by Vayatranamotrarika".

An finally we have the name *Śrī Jayabhagadata.*

Then we come to the representation of a flower on the top and the last two inscriptions, reading *Baljaya* and *Ghṛishṭavasya.*

We pass the Little Khomar and come to the Big Khomar where there is an opening at the Deva site. Then the river Indus has eroded the right bank and reached the very foot of the northern hill. Hence one has to walk right over the hill and come down to the carving of Hodur at the foot of the hill or descend on to the Hodur fort. At Hodur quite a new picture is presented, as has been already described in chapter VI. The path lies further ahead towards Thor and thus the pilgrim follows the Indus bank right upto Shatial, where the largest concentration of inscriptions and stupa drawing can be seen. Here we come to the end of our journey in the Chilas zone.

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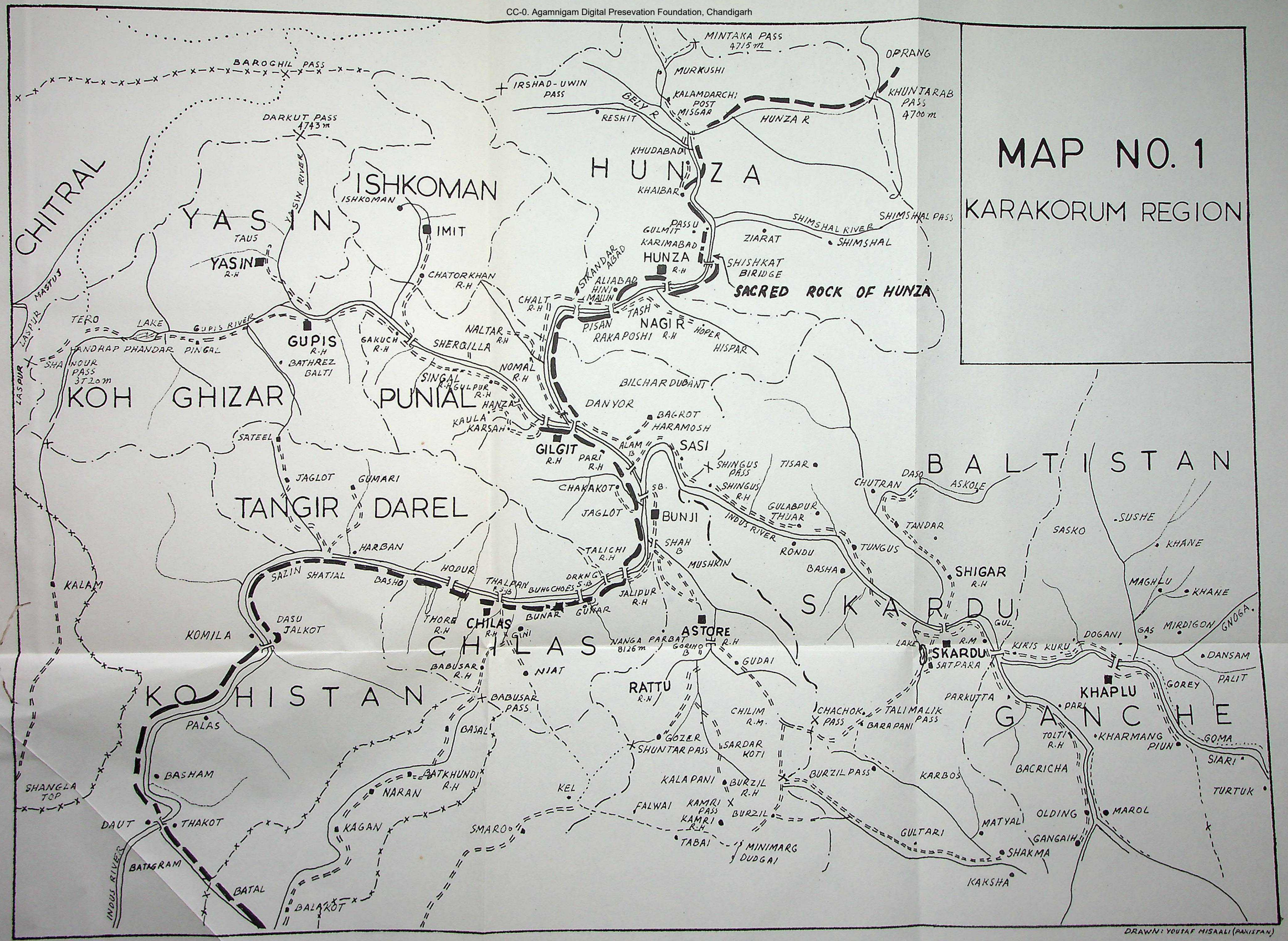

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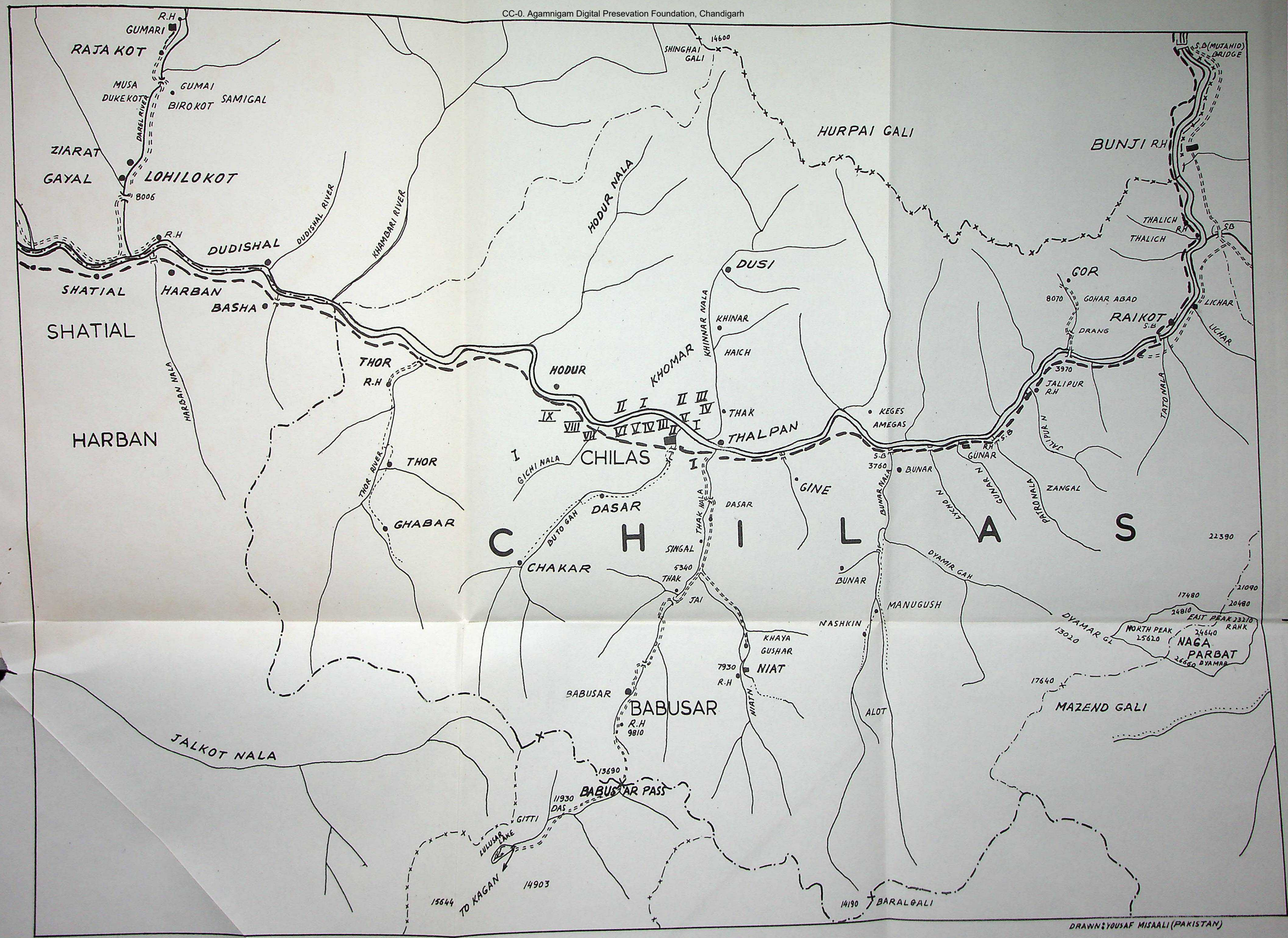


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# CHILAS REGION MAP NO. 2

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